· THE · TUDOR · SHAKESPEARE ·

· THE · MERRY · WIVES · OF · WINDSOR ·

Helen Anderson.

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The Tudor Shakespeare

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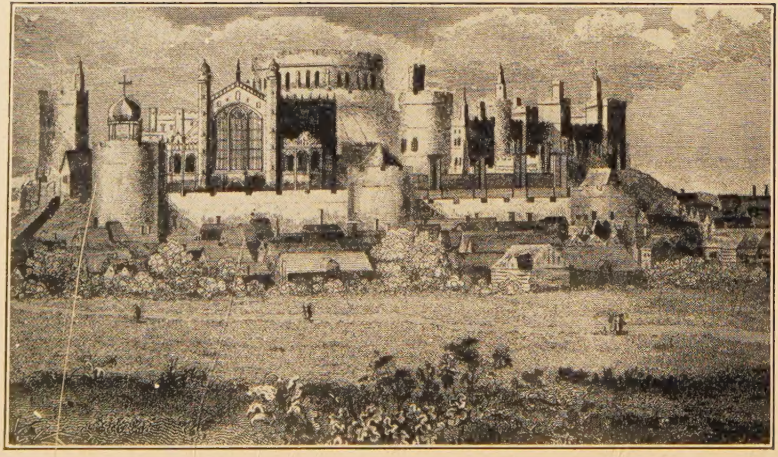

WINDSOR CASTLE

From an old print

THE TUDOR SHAKESPEARE

The Merry Wives of Windsor

EDITED BY

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New York

The Macmillan Company

1913

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Introduction

Text. — *The Merry Wives of Windsor* was first published in 1602, in a quarto with the title-page: "*A Most pleasaunt and excellent conceited Comedie, of Syr Iohn Falstaffe, and the merrie Wives of Windsor.* Entermixed with sundrie variable and pleasing humors, of Syr Hugh the Welch knight, Iustice Shallow, and his wise Cousin M. Slender With the swaggering vaine of Auncient Pistoll, and Corporall Nym. By William Shakespeare. As it hath bene diuers times Acted by the right Honorable my Lord Chamberlaines servants. Both before her Maiestie, and else-where. LONDON. Printed by T. C.[1] for Arthur Iohnson, and are to be sold at his shop in Powles Churchyard, at the signe of the Flower de Leuse and the Crowne. 1602."

This edition (Q_1) was reprinted in 1619 (Q_2) with only such minor changes as might be due to carelessness or to an attempt to amend and simplify some passages. In length, these quartos are only about one-half that of the present play, and mark no divisions into acts and scenes, though they contain descriptive stage directions. In the First Folio, 1623 (F_1), the length of the play, which occupies the third place among the comedies, is about double that of the quartos, and it is divided into scenes and acts. The third quarto, 1630 (Q_3), is a reprint of the Folio, with some orthographical changes.

[1] Thomas Creede.

The first Quarto has long been considered either a rough first draught of the play or a pirated edition printed from copy furnished by a shorthand reporter. Errors, misprints, and unintelligible sentences are frequent; yet they are such as conclusively to prove that this was derived from a rough acting-version, and printed from notes taken at the theatre, rather than from a draught of the play differing from that of the Folio; and this in spite of the fact that whole passages are transformed and scenes rearranged. The Folio, however, is itself in many places imperfect, and, though it forms the basis of this and other modern editions, is frequently amended by readings from the Quarto. It is not improbable that changes were made in the acting version and in the complete text between 1602 and 1623.

Date of Composition. — *The Merry Wives of Windsor* was entered on the Stationers' Register, January 18, 1602. In the Epilogue of the Second Part of *King Henry the Fourth*, produced in 1598 or 1599, this play and *Henry the Fifth* are foreshadowed in the following words: "One word more, I beseech you. If you be not too much cloy'd with fat meat, our humble author will continue the story with Sir John in it, and make you merry with fair Katherine of France, where, for anything I know, Falstaff shall die of a sweat, unless already 'a be killed with your hard opinions." *King Henry the Fifth* was produced in 1599, and it is still a debated question whether *The Merry Wives of Windsor* preceded it or followed it. In either case the comedy must have been produced between 1598 and 1600. Most modern critics believe that it was produced after *King Henry the Fifth* because Corporall Nym is mentioned

on the title-page and he was a humorous character in that play, but does not appear in *King Henry the Fourth* with the other "irregular humourists." That *King Henry the Fifth* contains the report of Falstaff's death does not invalidate this theory, because this play has no definite time connection with the trilogy; for in III. ii. 71, "He kept company with the wild prince," and at the end of *2 Henry the Fourth*, Prince Hal has become King. We must therefore regard the time of the action as prior to or during *2 Henry the Fourth*. The critics who would place it before *Henry the Fifth* base their arguments upon the assumption that Shakespeare interrupted the composition of the historical play to produce the comedy because it was commanded by the Queen. But it is more than possible that Elizabeth did not witness the earliest stage presentations of *Henry the Fourth*. That the play was written not later than 1600 is shown by the improbability that the author would ridicule a man recently deceased; and Sir Thomas Lucy, satirized as Justice Shallow, died in July, 1600. A careful study of the style of the play in connection with other plays the dates of which are known, and a consideration of internal evidence and of tradition unite in placing the date of composition near the Christmas season of 1599–1600.

Traditions concerning the Play. — About the present comedy two traditions have long been current; first, that it was written at the command of Queen Elizabeth and in fourteen days; second, that Justice Shallow is a satire upon Sir Thomas Lucy, who prosecuted the youthful Shakespeare for deer stealing.

The first of these dates from 1702, in which year John Dennis published one of the numerous "improved versions" of *The Merry Wives* under the title, *The Comical Gallant*. In the "Epistle Dedicatory" he praises the original play, which he had the temerity to alter, and adds: "I know very well that it hath pleased one of the greatest queens that ever was in the world. . . . This comedy was written at her command, and by her direction, and she was so eager to see it acted, that she commanded it to be finished in fourteen days; and was afterwards, as tradition tells us, very well pleased at the representation."

Rowe, in his *Life of Shakespeare*, 1709, repeats the story, with additions. Referring to the queen, he says, "She was so well pleased with that admirable character of Falstaff in The Two Parts of *Henry the Fourth*, that she commanded him to continue it for one play more, and to show him in love. This is said to be the occasion of his writing *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. How well she was obeyed, the play itself is an admirable proof."

The following year, 1710, Gildon published *Remarks on the Plays of Shakespeare*, in the course of which he comments upon *The Merry Wives*, concluding his estimate in the following sentence: "The Fairies, in the fifth Act, make a handsome compliment to the Queen in her Palace of Windsor, who had obliged Shakespear to write a play of Sir John Falstaff in Love, and which I am very well assured he performed in a Fortnight; a prodigious thing, when all is so well contrived, and carried on without the least confusion."

These three Shakespearean scholars of the early eighteenth century are the only authorities for this tradition;

later editors simply repeat their words. That the play was acted "before her Maiestie," is attested by the title page of Q_1, and it is to be remembered that none of these three scholars had seen any earlier edition than F_1. So plausible is the tradition that it is now accepted by most critics.

The second tradition is that the youthful Shakespeare was arrested for poaching and deer-stealing, was prosecuted by Sir Thomas Lucy, fled to London and created the character of Justice Shallow in revenge. The earliest reference is found in a manuscript note appended to this statement in Aubrey,[1] "This Wm, being inclined naturally to Poetry and acting, came to London, I guesse, about 18." The manuscript note, supposed to have been written by the Reverend Richard Davies between 1688 and 1707, states that Shakespeare was "much given to all unluckinesse in stealing venison and Rabbits particularly from Sr. Lucy, who had him oft whipt and sometimes imprisoned and at last made him fly his Native Country to his great Advancement, but his reveng was so great that he is his Justice Clodpate, and calls him a great man and that in allusion to his name bore three lowses rampant for his Arms."

Rowe, in his *Life of Shakespeare*, 1709, after telling the story of Shakespeare's marriage, continues, "In this kind of settlement he continued for some time, till an extravagance that he was guilty of forced him both out of his

[1] *Lives of Eminent Men*, by John Aubrey, compiled between 1669 and 1696; first printed in *Letters from the Bodleian*, 1813.

country and that way of living which he had taken up. . . . He had, by a misfortune common enough to young fellows, fallen into ill company, and amongst them, some that made a frequent practice of deer-stealing engaged him more than once in robbing a park that belonged to Sir Thomas Lucy, of Charlecote, near Stratford. For this he was prosecuted by that gentleman, as he thought, somewhat too severely; and in order to revenge that ill usage, he made a ballad upon him. And though this, probably the first essay of his poetry, be lost, yet it is said to have been so very bitter that it redoubled the prosecution against him to that degree that he was obliged to leave his business and family in Warwickshire for some time, and shelter himself in London." Later, in commenting upon Shakespeare's creation of Falstaff, Rowe says, "Amongst other extravagancies, in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* he has made him a deer stealer, that he might at the same time remember his Warwickshire prosecutor under the name of Justice Shallow; he has given him very near the same coat of arms which Dugdale, in his Antiquities of that county, describes for a family there, and makes the Welch parson descant very pleasantly upon them."

It is to be remembered that these statements were made from seventy to ninety years after the death of Shakespeare, and that there is no other foundation for this widespread tradition. The "discovered" ballad, which seemed to corroborate it, is now known to have been a later forgery, yet the arms of the Lucy family were "three luces argent." Of the truth or falsity of this tradition it is impossible to

judge, though throughout the eighteenth century it seems to have been implicitly believed.[1]

Sources of the Plot. — With the exception of *Love's Labour's Lost*, one of Shakespeare's earliest plays, of *The Tempest*, one of his latest, and of *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* owes less to specific sources than does any other of his plays. With very slight hints from contemporary literature and from Italian stories, the author seems to have invented the plot and the details. The basic incident of a man's courting two or more women at the same time was very common in the tales of the time. It is to be found in the second story of the second day in Ser Giovanni Fiorentino's *Il Pecorone*, in the third of Bandello's *Novelle*, in Straparola's *Le Tredici Piacevoli Notte*, fourth story of the second night, and in Painter's *Palace of Pleasure*, I. 49. In these tales a lover intrigues with two or three women on the same night, with results more or less disastrous to himself. The other common element, that of the deceived husband, is very frequent in Italian, French, and English tales of the Renaissance. It occurs with details somewhat like those of this play, in the second tale of the first day of *Il Pecorone;* in Straparola, the story of Nerisio of Portugal, the second story of the second night; and in a free English adaptation of these, *The Tale of the Two Lovers of Pisa* in the anonymous *Tarlton's Newes out of Purgatorie* (1590). Here the lover tells his intentions to the jealous husband, who

[1] An account of the real Sir Thomas Lucy is to be found in Madden's *Diary of Master William Silence*, London, 1895, pp. 106–108.

plans to surprise him; but the lady has him carried out in a chest, and again hides him in a vat of feathers. Similar stories are found in the numerous jest-books of the time and were probably very common. The combination of the stories, the invention of the details, and the creation of the characters must have been original with Shakespeare; for *The Merry Wives of Windsor* shows no verbal likeness to any printed version, except such as may have resulted from chance.

Stage History. — It is difficult to trace the stage history of any but the most popular plays. In the case of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, the difficulty is increased by the carelessness of the old annalists and chroniclers of the stage, who often inform the reader that a certain actor played Falstaff, without mentioning whether it was in *Henry the Fourth* or in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. This central figure was so popular that both the historical play and the comedy of which he is the chief personage have had an almost continuous life on the English stage.

The title-page of Q_1 states that this comedy "hath bene divers times acted by the right Honorable my Lord Chamberlaines servants. Both before Her Maiestie, and elsewhere." According to Malone, John Heminge "is said to have been the original Falstaff."[1] Heminge was a member of Shakespeare's company, one of the leaseholders of the Globe and the Blackfriars, and the famous player whose name we find, together with that of Condell, signed

[1] See Collier's *English Dramatic Poetry and Annals of the Stage* (1879), III. 404.

to the Dedication and Address to the Reader, prefixed to the First Folio. But the part may have been created by William Kemp, who was noted for the assumption of comic rôles and particularly those which ridiculed the Puritans. Wright's *Historia Histrionica* (1699) says that John Lowin (1576–1669) was famous as Falstaff "before the wars." He was not the originator of the part, for he did not join the King's players until 1603 or later; but he continued to play it until the closing of the theatres in 1642.

After the Restoration the fortunes of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* seem to have been bound up with those of the Drury Lane Theatre, opened in 1663. It was presented in its Shakespearean form and also in numerous "improved versions" and adaptations: chief among the latter were *Falstaff's Wedding* (1666) by Dr. Kenrick, and *The Comical Gallant: or the Amours of Sir John Falstaff* (1702) by John Dennis. The part of Falstaff was taken by Cartwright and by Lacy (d. 1681) who was highly praised by Pepys and who was the favorite comedian of Charles II. Early in the eighteenth century, Thomas Betterton (1635–1710) was esteemed by his contemporaries for the mirthfulness of his Falstaff, both in *Henry the Fourth* and in *The Sequel of Henry the Fourth* by himself. Eastcourt (d. 1712) "labored under a heavy load of flatness," when he assayed the part, says Colley Cibber in his *Apology*. The great tragedian, Barton Booth (1681–1733), once played Falstaff in the presence of Queen Anne, "to the delight of the whole audience."

At the rival theatre, Lincoln's Inn Fields, the season of 1720–1721 was marked by a series of Shakespearean re-

vivals; and James Quin (1692-1766) became the most famous Falstaff since Betterton, if not of all time, and for twenty-five years the most popular English actor. *The Merry Wives of Windsor* seems to have been in his repertory for a period of over thirty years. Unctuousness, hilarious jollity, naturalness, lack of grimace, and physical fitness for the part seem to have been the contemporary judgment concerning his Falstaff. Foote writes: "I can only recommend the man who wants to see a character perfectly played, to see Mr. Quin in the part of Falstaff; and if he does not express a desire to spend an evening with that merry mortal, why, I would not spend one with *him* if he would pay my reckoning." Horace Walpole upon hearing of his death exclaimed: "Pray, who is to give an idea of Falstaff, now Quin is dead?" That Garrick, the greatest actor of the eighteenth century, did not assume the part was popularly believed to be because of his recognition of his inferiority to Quin.

Meanwhile the play was revived at Drury Lane, where Harper played Falstaff before 1732, while Colley Cibber gained fame as Shallow and as Slender. Later at the Haymarket, in 1777, and at Drury Lane, in 1778, John Henderson, called the best general actor of his time, was pronounced superior to Quin for riotous mirth, comic facial expression, and highly colored acting, in the part of Falstaff, which "set all gravity at defiance." From 1730 to 1790, Love, Woodward, Shuter, Emery, Farley, Edwin, Dodd, and Blanchard also added to their reputations by appearing in this comedy. John Philip Kemble, who had become manager of Drury Lane in 1788, amended the

play in his edition of 1797 to the taste of his audiences, and in 1803 his brother Stephen played the part, to which he was adapted by his jocular obesity, for three performances, "with some success." His brother Charles soon essayed it with no greater favor. It was only when, later in the season, George Frederick Cooke played Falstaff to John Kemble's Ford, that the *Merry Wives* achieved the position of one of the favorite comedies of the nineteenth century.

In France and in Italy, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* is frequently presented in numerous excellent translations; and the Italian opera, *Falstaff*, by Maggioni, is still popular. In Germany, the play has had its greatest foreign success since the appearance of the translation by Karl Simrock (1867); the versions of Dorr (1877) and of Muench-Bellinghausen (1898) are later adaptations to the Teutonic taste of a peculiarly Teutonic comedy. In America, the play was first presented at the Southwark Theatre in Philadelphia on March 2, 1770, by "The American Company." Throughout the nineteenth century the play has been often presented in the United States, both by English and by American companies.

Interpretation. — Though probably written after *Henry the Fifth*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* should be read, as Johnson remarks, after *Henry the Fourth*. Falstaff and the other comic characters are revived from these plays, though Falstaff's death is reported in *Henry the Fifth*, and Nym and Bardolph are hanged. The time of the action must have been that of the first part of *Henry*

the Fourth, for Falstaff gives the impression that he is still a member of the court, and he has already "kept company with the wild Prince and with Poins." Mistress Quickly is presumably the Hostess of the historical trilogy, but she has now become a decent gossipy housekeeper. Shallow's fellow-justice Silence is replaced by his cousin Slender, and the other comedy characters are invented to carry out the plot of the simple story. The result is Shakespeare's most perfect picture of contemporary life and manners among the middle classes. In fact, it is his only comedy of contemporary English life, a life richer then than now in picturesqueness, contrast, individuality, humor, and variety of types. So convincingly are the characters presented that we find it hard to disbelieve that they actually lived in the flesh and that Shakespeare knew each of them in person.

Except for the omission of the promised revenge of Caius and Evans upon the Host, and a confusion of time in Falstaff's meetings with Mrs. Ford,[1] the play is constructed with as much care, and the motives of action are as plausible, as can be demanded of a farce-comedy. From the farcical burlesque of Shallow's coat of arms to the sympathetic triumph of Fenton and Anne Page, there is scarcely a speech, or even a single line, that does not have its special significance, either for the development of the plot or for the dramatic presentation of character. In the very first scene we learn to know the vain, foolish old justice, Shallow; the young, ignorant, but over-polite,

[1] See Daniel's "Time Analysis of the Plays" in the *Transactions of the New Shakspere Society*, 1878–1879.

quietly conceited, gullible Slender, ridiculous by his naïveté, stupidity, misapprehensions, and unintentional puns; Sir Hugh, curate and pedagogue, with his pedantic misuse of English in his Welsh dialect, like Fluellen in *Henry the Fifth;* Pistol, thief and coward, with his misquotations of blank-verse tragedy; Page, respectable, solid, middle-class tradesman; his lovable, sweet daughter; the honest, jolly young matrons; and the pompous, courtly Sir John, not yet awakened to humor, but posing as a falsely accused innocent. This first scene is not merely introductory, but it starts the action of the play, introduces Slender's courtship of Anne, and enlists our sympathy for her. Before the close of the first act, we become acquainted with the humors of the rough, jovial Host, with Falstaff's intentions upon Ford's wife and purse and upon Mrs. Page, with the revengeful plan of Nym and Pistol, with Dr. Caius, the nervous, irritable stage Frenchman, with Mistress Quickly's assent to be matchmaker for her lodger, Dr. Caius, and later for the manly Fenton, a serious and not a farcical character.

The plot is double, the romance of Anne Page being subordinated to the story of the humiliation of Falstaff by the merry wives. So thoroughly interwoven are plot and subplot that the comic and the romantic are often blended; for Anne's two unsuccessful suitors are comic figures, closely associated with the other humorous personages, while Fenton gains a sympathetic distinction by his very aloofness, as well as by the admirable, manly declaration of his love. The duping of Falstaff, his fatuous conceit which allows him to be tricked again and again,

the jealousy of Ford, and the mischievous plotting of the two wives, all are irresistibly comic.

The Sir John of this comedy is frequently criticised as not consistent with the Falstaff of *Henry the Fourth*. It is argued that he is no longer the rollicking, jesting, merrily hypocritical, self-excusing and humorously self-exalting compound of rogue and wit of the historical plays, but that he has become merely a gross, amorous, plotting, fatuous, and humiliated butt, who, in duping Ford, is himself the real dupe. However, even in the earlier play he characterizes himself as "not only witty in myself, but the cause that wit is in other men" and seems to recognize that he is often ridiculous. It is apparent, indeed, that he is the same man, simply placed in another situation; the earlier Sir John, frequenter of taverns and associate of Mistress Quickly, might well be supposed from all instances of his previous behaviour to be able to deceive the jealous husband while he is himself deceived by the wives. He whom his audience formerly laughed with, is now, by the very nature of the farce, laughed at; but both the outward and the inner man are still the same; again as in *Henry the Fourth* the inimitable Falstaff "lards the lean earth," reverend rogue and sprightly joker, "a humorist and a man of humor, a touchstone and a laughing-stock, a jester and a jest — the most perfect comic character that ever was exhibited."

The Merry Wives of Windsor

[DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Sir John Falstaff.
Fenton, a gentleman.
Shallow, a country justice.
Abraham Slender, cousin to Shallow.
Ford, Page, } gentlemen of Windsor.
William Page, a boy, son to Page.
Sir Hugh Evans, a Welsh parson.
Doctor Caius, a French physician.
Host of the Garter Inn.
Bardolph, Pistol, Nym, } followers of Falstaff.
Robin, page to Falstaff.
Peter Simple, servant to Slender.
John Rugby, servant to Doctor Caius.

Mistress Ford.
Mistress Page.
Mistress Anne Page, her daughter.
Mistress Quickly, servant to Doctor Caius.

Servants to Page, Ford, etc.

Scene: *Windsor, and the neighbourhood.*]

The Merry Wives of Windsor

ACT FIRST

SCENE I

[*Windsor. Before Page's house.*]

Enter Justice Shallow, Slender, and Sir Hugh Evans.

Shal. Sir Hugh, persuade me not; I will make a Star-chamber matter of it. If he were twenty Sir John Falstaffs, he shall not abuse Robert Shallow, esquire.

Slen. In the county of Gloucester, justice of peace and "Coram."

Shal. Ay, cousin Slender, and "Custalorum."

Slen. Ay, and "Rato-lorum" too; and a gentleman born, master parson; who writes himself "Armigero," in any bill, warrant, quittance, or obligation, "Armigero."

Shal. Ay, that I do; and have done any time these three hundred years.

Slen. All his successors gone before him hath done't; and all his ancestors that come after him may. They may give the dozen white luces in their coat.

Shal. It is an old coat.

Evans. The dozen white louses do become an old coat well; it agrees well, passant. It is a familiar beast to man, and signifies love.

Shal. The luce is the fresh fish; the salt fish is an old coat.

Slen. I may quarter, coz.

Shal. You may, by marrying.

Evans. It is marring indeed, if he quarter it.

Shal. Not a whit.

Evans. Yes, py'r lady. If he has a quarter of your coat, there is but three skirts for yourself, in my simple conjectures. But that is all one. If Sir John Falstaff have committed disparagements unto you, I am of the church, and will be glad to do my benevolence to make atonements and compremises between you.

Shal. The council shall hear it; it is a riot.

Evans. It is not meet the council hear a riot; there is no fear of Got in a riot. The council, look you, shall desire to hear the fear of Got, and not to hear a riot. Take your vizaments in that.

Shal. Ha! O' my life, if I were young again, the sword should end it.

Evans. It is petter that friends is the sword, and end it; and there is also another device in my prain, which peradventure prings goot discretions with it: there is Anne Page, which is daughter to Master George Page, which is pretty virginity.

Slen. Mistress Anne Page? She has brown hair, and speaks small like a woman.

Evans. It is that fery person for all the orld, as just as you will desire; and seven hundred pounds of moneys, and gold and silver, is her grandsire upon his death's-bed — Got deliver to a joyful resurrections! — give, when she is able to overtake seventeen years old. It were a goot motion if we leave our pribbles and prabbles, and desire a marriage between Master Abraham and Mistress Anne Page.

Shal. Did her grandsire leave her seven hundred pound?

Evans. Ay, and her father is make her a petter penny.

Shal. I know the young gentlewoman; she has good gifts.

Evans. Seven hundred pounds and possibilities is goot gifts.

Shal. Well, let us see honest Master Page. Is Falstaff there?

Evans. Shall I tell you a lie? I do despise a liar

as I do despise one that is false, or as I despise one that is not true. The knight, Sir John, is there; and, I beseech you, be ruled by your well-willers. I will peat the door for Master Page. [*Knocks.*] What, hoa! Got pless your house here!

Page. [*Within.*] Who's there?

[*Enter Page.*]

Evans. Here is Got's plessing, and your friend, and Justice Shallow; and here young Master Slender, that peradventures shall tell you another tale, if matters grow to your likings.

Page. I am glad to see your worships well. I thank you for my venison, Master Shallow.

Shal. Master Page, I am glad to see you. Much good do it your good heart! I wish'd your venison better; it was ill kill'd. How doth good Mistress Page? — and I thank you always with my heart, la! with my heart.

Page. Sir, I thank you.

Shal. Sir, I thank you; by yea and no, I do.

Page. I am glad to see you, good Master Slender.

Slen. How does your fallow greyhound, sir? I heard say he was outrun on Cotsall.

Page. It could not be judg'd, sir.

Slen. You'll not confess, you'll not confess.

Shal. That he will not. 'Tis your fault, 'tis your fault; 'tis a good dog.

Page. A cur, sir.

Shal. Sir, he's a good dog, and a fair dog; can there be more said? He is good and fair. Is Sir John Falstaff here?

Page. Sir, he is within; and I would I could do a good office between you.

Evans. It is spoke as a Christians ought to speak.

Shal. He hath wrong'd me, Master Page.

Page. Sir, he doth in some sort confess it.

Shal. If it be confessed, it is not redressed. Is not that so, Master Page? He hath wrong'd me; indeed he hath; at a word, he hath. Believe me, Robert Shallow, esquire, saith he is wrong'd.

Page. Here comes Sir John.

[*Enter Sir John Falstaff, Bardolph, Nym, and Pistol.*]

Fal. Now, Master Shallow, you'll complain of me to the King?

Shal. Knight, you have beaten my men, kill'd my deer, and broke open my lodge.

Fal. But not kiss'd your keeper's daughter?

Shal. Tut, a pin! This shall be answer'd.

Fal. I will answer it straight; I have done all this. That is now answer'd.

Shal. The council shall know this.

Fal. 'Twere better for you if it were known in counsel. You'll be laugh'd at.

Evans. *Pauca verba*, Sir John; goot worts.

Fal. Good worts! good cabbage. Slender, I broke your head; what matter have you against me?

Slen. Marry, sir, I have matter in my head against you; and against your cony-catching rascals, Bardolph, Nym, and Pistol. [They carried me to the tavern and made me drunk, and afterward picked my pocket.]

Bard. You Banbury cheese!

Slen. Ay, it is no matter.

Pist. How now, Mephostophilus!

Slen. Ay, it is no matter.

Nym. Slice, I say! pauca, pauca. Slice! that's my humour.

Slen. Where's Simple, my man? Can you tell, cousin?

Evans. Peace, I pray you. Now let us understand. There is three umpires in this matter, as I understand; that is, Master Page, *fidelicet* Master Page; and there is myself, *fidelicet* myself; and the three party is, lastly and finally, mine host of the Garter.

Page. We three to hear it and end it between them.

Evans. Fery goot. I will make a prief of it in my note-book, and we will afterwards ork upon the cause with as great discreetly as we can.

Fal. Pistol!

Pist. He hears with ears.

Evans. The tevil and his tam! what phrase is this, "He hears with ear"? Why, it is affectations.

Fal. Pistol, did you pick Master Slender's purse?

Slen. Ay, by these gloves, did he, or I would I might never come in mine own great chamber again else, of seven groats in mill-six-pences, and two Edward shovel-boards, that cost me two shilling and two pence a-piece of Yead Miller, by these gloves.

Fal. Is this true, Pistol?

Evans. No; it is false, if it is a pick-purse.

Pist. Ha, thou mountain-foreigner! Sir John and master mine,
I combat challenge of this latten bilbo.
Word of denial in thy *labras* here!
Word of denial! Froth and scum, thou liest!

Slen. By these gloves, then, 'twas he.

Nym. Be avis'd, sir, and pass good humours. I will say "marry trap" with you, if you run the nuthook's humour on me. That is the very note of it.

Slen. By this hat, then, he in the red face had it; for though I cannot remember what I did when you made me drunk, yet I am not altogether an ass.

Fal. What say you, Scarlet and John?

Bard. Why, sir, for my part, I say the gentleman had drunk himself out of his five sentences.

Evans. It is his five senses. Fie, what the ignorance is!

Bard. And being fap, sir, was, as they say, cashier'd; and so conclusions pass'd the careers.

Slen. Ay, you spake in Latin then too. But 'tis no matter; I'll ne'er be drunk whilst I live again, but in honest, civil, godly company, for this trick. If I be drunk, I'll be drunk with those that have the fear of God, and not with drunken knaves.

Evans. So Got udge me, that is a virtuous mind.

Fal. You hear all these matters deni'd, gentlemen; you hear it.

[*Enter Anne Page, with wine; Mistress Ford and Mistress Page, following.*]

Page. Nay, daughter, carry the wine in; we'll drink within. [*Exit Anne Page.*]

Slen. O heaven! this is Mistress Anne Page.

Page. How now, Mistress Ford!

Fal. Mistress Ford, by my troth, you are very well met. By your leave, good mistress.

Kisses her.

Page. Wife, bid these gentlemen welcome. Come, we have a hot venison pasty to dinner. Come, gentlemen, I hope we shall drink down all unkindness.

[*Exeunt all except Shal., Slen., and Evans.*]

Slen. I had rather than forty shillings I had my Book of Songs and Sonnets here.

[*Enter Simple.*]

How now, Simple! where have you been? I must wait on myself, must I? You have not the Book of Riddles about you, have you?

Sim. Book of Riddles! Why, did you not lend it to Alice Shortcake upon All-hallowmas last, a fortnight afore Michaelmas?

Shal. Come, coz; come, coz; we stay for you. A word with you, coz; marry, this, coz: there is, as 'twere, a tender, a kind of tender, made afar off by Sir Hugh here. Do you understand me?

Slen. Ay, sir, you shall find me reasonable. If it be so, I shall do that that is reason.

Shal. Nay, but understand me.

Slen. So I do, sir.

Evans. Give ear to his motions, Master Slender.

I will description the matter to you, if you be capacity of it.

Slen. Nay, I will do as my cousin Shallow says. I pray you, pardon me; he's a justice of peace in his country, simple though I stand here.

Evans. But that is not the question: the question is concerning your marriage.

Shal. Ay, there's the point, sir.

Evans. Marry, is it; the very point of it; to Mistress Anne Page.

Slen. Why, if it be so, I will marry her upon any reasonable demands.

Evans. But can you affection the 'oman? Let us command to know that of your mouth or of your lips; for divers philosophers hold that the lips is parcel of the mouth. Therefore, precisely, can you carry your good will to the maid?

Shal. Cousin Abraham Slender, can you love her?

Slen. I hope, sir, I will do as it shall become one that would do reason.

Evans. Nay, Got's lords and his ladies! You must speak possitable, if you can carry her your desires towards her.

Shal. That you must. Will you, upon good dowry, marry her?

Slen. I will do a greater thing than that, upon your request, cousin, in any reason.

Shal. Nay, conceive me, conceive me, sweet coz; what I do is to pleasure you, coz. Can you love the maid?

Slen. I will marry her, sir, at your request; but if there be no great love in the beginning, yet heaven may decrease it upon better acquaintance, when we are married and have more occasion to know one another. I hope, upon familiarity will grow more content. But if you say, "Marry her," I will marry her; that I am freely dissolved, and dissolutely.

Evans. It is a fery discretion answer, save the fall is in the ort "dissolutely." The ort is, according to our meaning, "resolutely." His meaning is good.

Shal. Ay, I think my cousin meant well.

Slen. Ay, or else I would I might be hang'd, la!

Shal. Here comes fair Mistress Anne.

[*Re-enter Anne Page.*]

Would I were young for your sake, Mistress Anne!

Anne. The dinner is on the table. My father desires your worships' company.

Shal. I will wait on him, fair Mistress Anne.

Evans. Od's plessed will, I will not be absence at the grace.

[*Exeunt Shallow and Evans.*]

Anne. Will't please your worship to come in, sir?

Slen. No, I thank you, forsooth, heartily; I am very well.

Anne. The dinner attends you, sir.

Slen. I am not a-hungry; I thank you, forsooth. Go, sirrah, for all you are my man, go wait upon my cousin Shallow. [*Exit Simple.*] A justice of peace sometime may be beholding to his friend for a man. I keep but three men and a boy yet, till my mother be dead. But what though? Yet I live like a poor gentleman born.

Anne. I may not go in without your worship. They will not sit till you come.

Slen. I' faith, I'll eat nothing. I thank you as much as though I did.

Anne. I pray you, sir, walk in.

Slen. I had rather walk here, I thank you. I bruis'd my shin the other day with playing at sword and dagger with a master of fence; three veneys for a dish of stew'd prunes; and, by my troth, I cannot abide the smell of hot meat since. Why do your dogs bark so? Be there bears i' the town?

Anne. I think there are, sir; I heard them talk'd of.

Slen. I love the sport well; but I shall as soon

quarrel at it as any man in England. You are afraid, if you see the bear loose, are you not?

Anne. Ay, indeed, sir.

Slen. That's meat and drink to me, now. I have seen Sackerson loose twenty times, and have taken him by the chain; but, I warrant you, the women have so cri'd and shriek'd at it, that it pass'd. But women, indeed, cannot abide 'em; they are very ill-favour'd rough things.

[*Re-enter Page.*]

Page. Come, gentle Master Slender, come; we stay for you.

Slen. I'll eat nothing, I thank you, sir.

Page. By cock and pie, you shall not choose, sir! Come, come.

Slen. Nay, pray you, lead the way.

Page. Come on, sir.

Slen. Mistress Anne, yourself shall go first.

Anne. Not I, sir; pray you, keep on.

Slen. Truly, I will not go first; truly, la! I will not do you that wrong.

Anne. I pray you, sir.

Slen. I'll rather be unmannerly than troublesome. You do yourself wrong, indeed, la!

Exeunt.

Scene II

[*The same.*]

Enter Sir Hugh Evans and Simple.

Evans. Go your ways, and ask of Doctor Caius' house which is the way; and there dwells one Mistress Quickly, which is in the manner of his nurse, or his dry nurse, or his cook, or his laundry, his washer, and his wringer.

Sim. Well, sir.

Evans. Nay, it is petter yet. Give her this letter; for it is a 'oman that altogether's acquaintance with Mistress Anne Page; and the letter is, to desire and require her to solicit your master's desires to Mistress Anne Page. I pray you, pegone. I will make an end of my dinner; there's pippins and cheese to come.

Exeunt.

Scene III

[*A room in the Garter Inn.*]

Enter Falstaff, Host, Bardolph, Nym, Pistol, and page [*Robin*].

Fal. Mine host of the Garter!

Host. What says my bully-rook? Speak scholarly and wisely.

Fal. Truly, mine host, I must turn away some of my followers.

Host. Discard, bully Hercules; cashier. Let them wag. Trot, trot.

Fal. I sit at ten pounds a week.

Host. Thou'rt an emperor, Cæsar, Keisar, and Pheezar. I will entertain Bardolph; he shall draw, he shall tap. Said I well, bully Hector?

Fal. Do so, good mine host.

Host. I have spoke; let him follow. [*To Bard.*] Let me see thee froth and lime. I am at a word; follow. [*Exit.*]

Fal. Bardolph, follow him. A tapster is a good trade. An old cloak makes a new jerkin; a wither'd serving-man a fresh tapster. Go; adieu.

Bard. It is a life that I have desir'd. I will thrive. [*Exit Bardolph.*]

Pist. O base Hungarian wight! wilt thou the spigot wield?

Nym. He was gotten in drink. Is not the humour conceited?

Fal. I am glad I am so acquit of this tinder-box; his thefts were too open. His filching was like an unskilful singer; he kept not time.

Nym. The good humour is to steal at a minute's rest.

Pist. "Convey," the wise it call. "Steal!" foh! A fico for the phrase!

Fal. Well, sirs, I am almost out at heels.

Pist. Why, then, let kibes ensue.

Fal. There is no remedy; I must cony-catch; I must shift.

Pist. Young ravens must have food.

Fal. Which of you know Ford of this town?

Pist. I ken the wight; he is of substance good.

Fal. My honest lads, I will tell you what I am about.

Pist. Two yards, and more.

Fal. No quips now, Pistol! Indeed, I am in the waist two yards about; but I am now about no waste, I am about thrift. Briefly, I do mean to make love to Ford's wife. I spy entertainment in her. She discourses, she carves, she gives the leer of invitation. I can construe the action of her familiar style; and the hardest voice of her behaviour, to be English'd rightly, is, "I am Sir John Falstaff's."

Pist. He hath studied her well, and translated her will out of honesty into English.

Nym. The anchor is deep. Will that humour pass?

Fal. Now, the report goes she has all the rule of her husband's purse. He hath a legion of angels.

Pist. As many devils entertain; and "To her, boy," say I.

Nym. The humour rises; it is good. Humour me the angels.

Fal. I have writ me here a letter to her; and here another to Page's wife, who even now gave me good eyes too, examin'd my parts with most judicious *œillades;* sometimes the beam of her view gilded my foot, sometimes my portly belly.

Pist. Then did the sun on dunghill shine.

Nym. I thank thee for that humour.

Fal. O, she did so course o'er my exteriors with such a greedy intention, that the appetite of her eye did seem to scorch me up like a burning-glass! Here's another letter to her. She bears the purse too; she is a region in Guiana, all gold and bounty. I will be cheaters to them both, and they shall be exchequers to me. They shall be my East and West Indies, and I will trade to them both. Go bear thou this letter to Mistress Page; and thou this to Mistress Ford. We will thrive, lads, we will thrive.

Pist. Shall I Sir Pandarus of Troy become,
And by my side wear steel? Then, Lucifer take all!

Nym. I will run no base humour. Here, take the humour-letter; I will keep the haviour of reputation.

Fal. [*To Robin.*] Hold, sirrah, bear you these letters tightly;
Sail like my pinnace to these golden shores.
Rogues, hence, avaunt! Vanish like hailstones, go!
Trudge! Plod away o' the hoof! Seek shelter! Pack!
Falstaff will learn the humour of the age,
French thrift, you rogues; myself and skirted page. *Exeunt Falstaff and Robin.*

Pist. Let vultures gripe thy guts! for gourd and fullam holds,
And high and low beguiles the rich and poor.
Tester I'll have in pouch when thou shalt lack,
Base Phrygian Turk!

Nym. I have operations which be humours of revenge.

Pist. Wilt thou revenge?

Nym. By welkin and her star!

Pist. With wit or steel?

Nym. With both the humours, I.
I will discuss the humour of this love to Page.

Pist. And I to Ford shall eke unfold
How Falstaff, varlet vile,
His dove will prove, his gold will hold,
And his soft couch defile.

Nym. My humour shall not cool. I will incense
Page to deal with poison; I will possess him

with yellowness, for the revolt of mine is dangerous. That is my true humour.

Pist. Thou art the Mars of malcontents. I second thee; troop on. *Exeunt.*

SCENE IV

[*A room in Doctor Caius's house.*]

Enter Mistress Quickly, Simple, and John Rugby.

Quick. What, John Rugby! I pray thee, go to the casement, and see if you can see my master, Master Doctor Caius, coming. If he do, i' faith, and find any body in the house, here will be an old abusing of God's patience and the King's English.

Rug. I'll go watch.

Quick. Go; and we'll have a posset for't soon at night, in faith, at the latter end of a sea-coal fire. [*Exit Rugby.*] An honest, willing, kind fellow, as ever servant shall come in house withal, and, I warrant you, no tell-tale nor no breed-bate. His worst fault is, that he is given to prayer. He is something peevish that way; but nobody but has his fault. But let that pass. Peter Simple, you say your name is?

Sim. Ay, for fault of a better.

Quick. And Master Slender's your master?

Sim. Ay, forsooth.

Quick. Does he not wear a great round beard, like a glover's paring-knife?

Sim. No, forsooth; he hath but a little wee face, with a little yellow beard, a Cain-colour'd beard.

Quick. A softly-sprighted man, is he not?

Sim. Ay, forsooth; but he is as tall a man of his hands as any is between this and his head. He hath fought with a warrener.

Quick. How say you? O, I should remember him. Does he not hold up his head, as it were, and strut in his gait?

Sim. Yes, indeed, does he.

Quick. Well, Heaven send Anne Page no worse fortune! Tell Master Parson Evans I will do what I can for your master. Anne is a good girl, and I wish —

[*Re-enter Rugby.*]

Rug. Out, alas! here comes my master.

Quick. We shall all be shent. Run in here, good young man; go into this closet. He will not stay long. [*Shuts Simple in the closet.*] What, John Rugby! John! what, John, I say! Go, John, go inquire for my master; I doubt he be not well, that he comes not home. [*Singing.*] And down, down, adown-a, etc.

[*Enter Doctor Caius.*]

Caius. Vat is you sing? I do not like dese toys. Pray you, go and vetch me in my closet *une boite en verde*, a box, a green-a box. Do intend vat I speak? A green-a box.

Quick. Ay, forsooth; I'll fetch it you. [*Aside.*] I am glad he went not in himself; if he had found the young man, he would have been horn-mad.

Caius. Fe, fe, fe, fe! *ma foi, il fait fort chaud. Je m'en vais à la cour, — la grande affaire.*

Quick. Is it this, sir?

Caius. Oui; mette le au mon pocket; dépêche, quickly. Vere is dat knave Rugby?

Quick. What, John Rugby! John!

Rug. Here, sir!

Caius. You are John Rugby, and you are Jack Rugby. Come, take-a your rapier, and come after my heel to the court.

Rug. 'Tis ready, sir, here in the porch.

Caius. By my trot, I tarry too long. Od's me! *Qu'ai-j'oublié?* Dere is some simples in my closet, dat I vill not for the varld I shall leave behind.

Quick. Ay me, he'll find the young man there, and be mad!

Caius. O diable, diable! vat is in my closet? Vil-

lainy! Laron! [*Pulling Simple out.*] Rugby, my rapier!

Quick. Good master, be content.

Caius. Wherefore shall I be content-a?

Quick. The young man is an honest man.

Caius. What shall de honest man do in my closet? Dere is no honest man dat shall come in my closet.

Quick. I beseech you, be not so phlegmatic. Hear the truth of it: he came of an errand to me from Parson Hugh.

Caius. Vell?

Sim. Ay, forsooth; to desire her to —

Quick. Peace, I pray you.

Caius. Peace-a your tongue. Speak-a your tale.

Sim. To desire this honest gentlewoman, your maid, to speak a good word to Mistress Anne Page for my master in the way of marriage.

Quick. This is all, indeed, la! but I'll ne'er put my finger in the fire, and need not.

Caius. Sir Hugh send-a you? Rugby, *baillez* me some paper. Tarry you a little-a while. [*Writes.*]

Quick. [*Aside to Simple.*] I am glad he is so quiet. If he had been thoroughly moved, you should have heard him so loud and so melancholy. But notwithstanding, man, I'll do you your

master what good I can; and the very yea and the no is, the French doctor, my master, — I may call him my master, look you, for I keep his house; and I wash, wring, brew, bake, scour, dress meat and drink, make the beds, and do all myself, —

Sim. [*Aside to Quickly.*] 'Tis a great charge to come under one body's hand.

Quick. [*Aside to Simple.*] Are you avis'd o' that? You shall find it a great charge; and to be up early and down late; but notwithstanding,— to tell you in your ear; I would have no words of it, — my master himself is in love with Mistress Anne Page; but notwithstanding that, I know Anne's mind, — that's neither here nor there.

Caius. You jack'nape, give-a this letter to Sir Hugh. By gar, it is a shallenge. I will cut his troat in de park; and I will teach a scurvy jack-a-nape priest to meddle or make. You may be gone; it is not good you tarry here. By gar, I will cut all his two stones; by gar, he shall not have a stone to throw at his dog.

[*Exit Simple.*]

Quick. Alas, he speaks but for his friend.

Caius. It is no matter-a ver dat. Do not you tell-a me dat I shall have Anne Page for myself? By gár, I vill kill de Jack priest; and I have appointed mine host of de Jarteer to

measure our weapon. By gar, I will myself have Anne Page.

Quick. Sir, the maid loves you, and all shall be well. We must give folks leave to prate; what, the good-year!

Caius. Rugby, come to the court with me. By gar, if I have not Anne Page, I shall turn your head out of my door. Follow my heels, Rugby. [*Exeunt Caius and Rugby.*]

Quick. You shall have An —— fool's-head of your own. No, I know Anne's mind for that. Never a woman in Windsor knows more of Anne's mind than I do; nor can do more than I do with her, I thank Heaven.

Fent. [*Within.*] Who's within there? ho!

Quick. Who's there, I trow! Come near the house, I pray you.

[*Enter Fenton.*]

Fent. How now, good woman! how dost thou?

Quick. The better that it pleases your good worship to ask.

Fent. What news? How does pretty Mistress Anne?

Quick. In truth, sir, and she is pretty, and honest, and gentle; and one that is your friend, I can tell you that by the way; I praise Heaven for it.

Fent. Shall I do any good, think'st thou? Shall I not lose my suit?

Quick. Troth, sir, all is in His hands above. But notwithstanding, Master Fenton, I'll be sworn on a book, she loves you. Have not your worship a wart above your eye?

Fent. Yes, marry, have I; what of that?

Quick. Well, thereby hangs a tale. Good faith, it is such another Nan; but, I detest, an honest maid as ever broke bread. We had an hour's talk of that wart. I shall never laugh but in that maid's company! But indeed she is given too much to allicholy and musing; but for you — well, go to.

Fent. Well, I shall see her to-day. Hold, there's money for thee; let me have thy voice in my behalf. If thou seest her before me, commend me —

Quick. Will I? I' faith, that we will; and I will tell your worship more of the wart the next time we have confidence; and of other wooers.

Fent. Well, farewell; I am in great haste now.

Quick. Farewell to your worship. [*Exit Fenton.*] Truly, an honest gentleman; but Anne loves him not; for I know Anne's mind as well as another does. Out upon't! what have I forgot? *Exit.*

ACT SECOND

SCENE I

[Before Page's house.]

Enter Mistress Page [with a letter].

Mrs. Page. What, have I scap'd love-letters in the holiday-time of my beauty, and am I now a subject for them? Let me see. [*Reads.*] "Ask me no reason why I love you; for though Love use Reason for his precisian, he admits him not for his counsellor. You are not young, no more am I; go to then, there's sympathy. You are merry, so am I; ha, ha! then there's more sympathy. You love sack, and so do I; would you desire better sympathy? Let it suffice thee, Mistress Page, — at the least, if the love of a soldier can suffice, — that I love thee. I will not say, pity me; 'tis not a soldier-like phrase; but I say, love me. By me,

Thine own true knight,
By day or night,
Or any kind of light,
With all his might
For thee to fight,

JOHN FALSTAFF."

What a Herod of Jewry is this! O wicked, wicked world! One that is well-nigh worn to pieces with age to show himself a young gallant! What an unweigh'd behaviour hath this Flemish drunkard pick'd—with the devil's name!—out of my conversation, that he dares in this manner assay me? Why, he hath not been thrice in my company! What should I say to him? I was then frugal of my mirth. Heaven forgive me! Why, I'll exhibit a bill in the parliament for the putting down of men. How shall I be reveng'd on him? for reveng'd I will be, as sure as his guts are made of puddings.

[*Enter Mistress Ford.*]

Mrs. Ford. Mistress Page! trust me, I was going to your house.

Mrs. Page. And, trust me, I was coming to you. You look very ill.

Mrs. Ford. Nay, I'll ne'er believe that; I have to show to the contrary.

Mrs. Page. Faith, but you do, in my mind.

Mrs. Ford. Well, I do then; yet I say I could show you to the contrary. O Mistress Page, give me some counsel!

Mrs. Page. What's the matter, woman?

Mrs. Ford. O woman, if it were not for one trifling respect, I could come to such honour!

Mrs. Page. Hang the trifle, woman! take the honour. What is it? Dispense with trifles. What is it?

Mrs. Ford. If I would but go to hell for an eternal moment or so, I could be knighted.

Mrs. Page. What? Thou liest! Sir Alice Ford! These knights will hack; and so thou shouldst not alter the article of thy gentry.

Mrs. Ford. We burn daylight. Here, read, read; perceive how I might be knighted. I shall think the worse of fat men, as long as I have an eye to make difference of men's liking; and yet he would not swear; praised women's modesty; and gave such orderly and well-behaved reproof to all uncomeliness, that I would have sworn his disposition would have gone to the truth of his words; but they do no more adhere and keep place together than the Hundredth Psalm to the tune of "Green Sleeves." What tempest, I trow, threw this whale, with so many tuns of oil in his belly, ashore at Windsor? How shall I be revenged on him? I think the best way were to entertain him with hope, till the wicked fire of lust have melted him in his own grease. Did you ever hear the like?

Mrs. Page. Letter for letter, but that the name of Page and Ford differs! To thy great comfort in this mystery of ill opinions, here's the

twin-brother of thy letter; but let thine inherit first; for, I protest, mine never shall. I warrant he hath a thousand of these letters writ with blank space for different names, — sure, more, — and these are of the second edition. He will print them, out of doubt; for he cares not what he puts into the press, when he would put us two. I had rather be a giantess, and lie under Mount Pelion. Well, I will find you twenty lascivious turtles ere one chaste man.

Mrs. Ford. Why, this is the very same; the very hand, the very words. What doth he think of us?

Mrs. Page. Nay, I know not. It makes me almost ready to wrangle with mine own honesty. I'll entertain myself like one that I am not acquainted withal; for, sure, unless he know some strain in me that I know not myself, he would never have boarded me in this fury.

Mrs. Ford. "Boarding," call you it? I'll be sure to keep him above deck.

Mrs. Page. So will I. If he come under my hatches, I'll never to sea again. Let's be reveng'd on him. Let's appoint him a meeting, give him a show of comfort in his suit, and lead him on with a fine-baited delay, till he hath pawn'd his horses to mine host of the Garter.

Mrs. Ford. Nay, I will consent to act any villainy

against him, that may not sully the chariness of our honesty. O, that my husband saw this letter! It would give eternal food to his jealousy.

Mrs. Page. Why, look where he comes; and my good man too. He's as far from jealousy as I am from giving him cause; and that I hope is an unmeasurable distance.

Mrs. Ford. You are the happier woman.

Mrs. Page. Let's consult together against this greasy knight. Come hither. [*They retire.*]

[*Enter Ford with Pistol, and Page with Nym.*]

Ford. Well, I hope it be not so.

Pist. Hope is a curtal dog in some affairs.
Sir John affects thy wife.

Ford. Why, sir, my wife is not young.

Pist. He woos both high and low, both rich and poor,
Both young and old, one with another, Ford.
He loves the gallimaufry. Ford, perpend.

Ford. Love my wife!

Pist. With liver burning hot. Prevent, or go thou,
Like Sir Actæon he, with Ringwood at thy heels.
O, odious is the name!

Ford. What name, sir?

Pist. The horn, I say. Farewell.
Take heed, have open eye, for thieves do foot by night.

Take heed, ere summer comes or cuckoo-birds do sing.
Away, Sir Corporal Nym!
Believe it, Page; he speaks sense. [*Exit.*]

Ford. [*Aside.*] I will be patient; I will find out this.

Nym. [*To Page.*] And this is true; I like not the humour of lying. He hath wronged me in some humours. I should have borne the humour'd letter to her; but I have a sword and it shall bite upon my necessity. He loves your wife; there's the short and the long. My name is Corporal Nym; I speak and I avouch; 'tis true; my name is Nym and Falstaff loves your wife. Adieu. I love not the humour of bread and cheese [and there's the humour of it]. Adieu. [*Exit.*]

Page. "The humour of it," quoth 'a! Here's a fellow frights English out of his wits.

Ford. I will seek out Falstaff.

Page. I never heard such a drawling, affecting rogue.

Ford. If I do find it! Well.

Page. I will not believe such a Cataian, though the priest o' the town commended him for a true man.

Ford. 'Twas a good sensible fellow. Well.

Page. How now, Meg!

[*Mrs. Page and Mrs. Ford come forward.*]

Mrs. Page. Whither go you, George? Hark you.

Mrs. Ford. How now, sweet Frank! Why art thou melancholy?

Ford. I melancholy! I am not melancholy. Get you home, go.

Mrs. Ford. Faith, thou hast some crotchets in thy head now. Will you go, Mistress Page?

Mrs. Page. Have with you. You'll come to dinner, George. [*Aside to Mrs. Ford.*] Look who comes yonder. She shall be our messenger to this paltry knight.

Mrs. Ford. [*Aside to Mrs. Page.*] Trust me, I thought on her. She'll fit it.

[*Enter Mistress Quickly.*]

Mrs. Page. You are come to see my daughter Anne?

Quick. Ay, forsooth; and, I pray, how does good Mistress Anne?

Mrs. Page. Go in with us and see. We have an hour's talk with you.

Exeunt Mrs. Page, Mrs. Ford, and Mrs. Quickly.

Page. How now, Master Ford!

Ford. You heard what this knave told me, did you not?

Page. Yes; and you heard what the other told me?

Ford. Do you think there is truth in them?

Page. Hang 'em, slaves! I do not think the knight would offer it; but these that accuse him in his intent towards our wives are a yoke of his discarded men; very rogues, now they be out of service.

Ford. Were they his men?

Page. Marry, were they.

Ford. I like it never the better for that. Does he lie at the Garter?

Page. Ay, marry, does he. If he should intend this voyage towards my wife, I would turn her loose to him; and what he gets more of her than sharp words, let it lie on my head.

Ford. I do not misdoubt my wife; but I would be loath to turn them together. A man may be too confident. I would have nothing lie on my head. I cannot be thus satisfied.

Enter Host.

Page. Look where my ranting host of the Garter comes. There is either liquor in his pate or money in his purse when he looks so merrily. How now, mine host!

Host. How now, bully-rook! thou'rt a gentleman. Cavaleiro-justice, I say!

[*Enter Shallow.*]

Shal. I follow, mine host, I follow. Good even and twenty, good Master Page! Master Page, will you go with us? We have sport in hand.

Host. Tell him, cavaleiro-justice; tell him, bully-rook.

Shal. Sir, there is a fray to be fought between Sir Hugh the Welsh priest and Caius the French doctor.

Ford. Good mine host o' the Garter, a word with you.

[*Drawing him aside.*]

Host. What say'st thou, my bully-rook?

Shal. [*To Page.*] Will you go with us to behold it? My merry host hath had the measuring of their weapons, and, I think, hath appointed them contrary places; for, believe me, I hear the parson is no jester. Hark, I will tell you what our sport shall be.

[*They draw aside.*]

Host. Hast thou no suit against my knight, my guest-cavaleiro?

[*Ford.*] None, I protest; but I'll give you a pottle of burnt sack to give me recourse to him and tell him my name is Brook; only for a jest.

Host. My hand, bully; thou shalt have egress

and regress; — said I well? — and thy name shall be Brook. It is a merry knight. Will you go, Mynheers?

Shal. Have with you, mine host.

Page. I have heard the Frenchman hath good skill in his rapier.

Shal. Tut, sir, I could have told you more. In these times you stand on distance, your passes, stoccadoes, and I know not what. 'Tis the heart, Master Page; 'tis here, 'tis here. I have seen the time, with my long sword I would have made you four tall fellows skip like rats.

Host. Here, boys, here, here! shall we wag?

Page. Have with you. I had rather hear them scold than fight.

Exeunt Host, Shal. [*and Page*].

Ford. Though Page be a secure fool, and stands so firmly on his wife's frailty, yet I cannot put off my opinion so easily. She was in his company at Page's house; and what they made there, I know not. Well, I will look further into't; and I have a disguise to sound Falstaff. If I find her honest, I lose not my labour; if she be otherwise, 'tis labour well bestowed. *Exit.*

Scene II

[A room in the Garter Inn.]

Enter Falstaff and Pistol.

Fal. I will not lend thee a penny.

Pist. Why, then the world's mine oyster,
Which I with sword will open.

Fal. Not a penny. I have been content, sir, you should lay my countenance to pawn. I have grated upon my good friends for three reprieves for you and your coach-fellow Nym; or else you had look'd through the grate, like a geminy of baboons. I am damn'd in hell for swearing to gentlemen my friends, you were good soldiers and tall fellows; and when Mistress Bridget lost the handle of her fan, I took't upon mine honour thou hadst it not.

Pist. Didst not thou share? Hadst thou not fifteen pence?

Fal. Reason, you rogue, reason. Think'st thou I'll endanger my soul gratis? At a word, hang no more about me; I am no gibbet for you. Go. A short knife and a throng! To your manor of Pickt-hatch! Go. You'll not bear a letter for me, you rogue! You stand upon your honour! Why, thou unconfinable baseness, it is as much as I can do to

keep the terms of my honour precise. Ay, I myself sometimes, leaving the fear of God on the left hand and hiding mine honour in my necessity, am fain to shuffle, to hedge, and to lurch; and yet you, rogue, will ensconce your rags, your cat-a-mountain looks, your red-lattice phrases, and your bold-beating oaths, under the shelter of your honour! You will not do it! You!

Pist. I do relent. What would thou more of man?

Enter Robin.

Rob. Sir, here's a woman would speak with you.

Fal. Let her approach.

Enter Mistress Quickly.

Quick. Give your worship good morrow.

Fal. Good morrow, good wife.

Quick. Not so, an't please your worship.

Fal. Good maid, then.

Quick. I'll be sworn,
As my mother was, the first hour I was born.

Fal. I do believe the swearer. What with me?

Quick. Shall I vouchsafe your worship a word or two?

Fal. Two thousand, fair woman; and I'll vouchsafe thee the hearing.

Quick. There is one Mistress Ford, sir; — I pray,

come a little nearer this ways; — I myself dwell with Master Doctor Caius, —

Fal. Well, on. Mistress Ford, you say, —

Quick. Your worship says very true. I pray your worship, come a little nearer this ways.

Fal. I warrant thee, nobody hears; mine own people, mine own people.

Quick. Are they so? God bless them and make them his servants!

Fal. Well, Mistress Ford; what of her?

Quick. Why, sir, she's a good creature. Lord, Lord! your worship's a wanton! Well, Heaven forgive you, and all of us, I pray!

Fal. Mistress Ford; come, mistress Ford, —

Quick. Marry, this is the short and the long of it: you have brought her into such a canaries as 'tis wonderful. The best courtier of them all, when the court lay at Windsor, could never have brought her to such a canary. Yet there has been knights, and lords, and gentlemen, with their coaches, I warrant you, coach after coach, letter after letter, gift after gift; smelling so sweetly, all musk, and so rushling, I warrant you, in silk and gold; and in such alligant terms; and in such wine and sugar of the best and the fairest, that would have won any woman's heart; and, I warrant you, they could never get an eye-wink of her.

I had myself twenty angels given me this morning; but I defy all angels, in any such sort, as they say, but in the way of honesty; and, I warrant you, they could never get her so much as sip on a cup with the proudest of them all; and yet there has been earls, nay, which is more, pensioners; but, I warrant you, all is one with her.

Fal. But what says she to me? Be brief, my good she-Mercury.

Quick. Marry, she hath receiv'd your letter, for the which she thanks you a thousand times; and she gives you to notify that her husband will be absence from his house between ten and eleven.

Fal. Ten and eleven?

Quick. Ay, forsooth; and then you may come and see the picture, she says, that you wot of. Master Ford, her husband, will be from home. Alas! the sweet woman leads an ill life with him. He's a very jealousy man. She leads a very frampold life with him, good heart.

Fal. Ten and eleven. Woman, commend me to her; I will not fail her.

Quick. Why, you say well. But I have another messenger to your worship. Mistress Page hath her hearty commendations to you too; and let me tell you in your ear, she's as

fartuous a civil modest wife, and one, I tell you, that will not miss you morning nor evening prayer, as any is in Windsor, whoe'er be the other; and she bade me tell your worship that her husband is seldom from home; but she hopes there will come a time. I never knew a woman so dote upon a man. Surely I think you have charms, la; yes, in truth.

Fal. Not I, I assure thee. Setting the attraction of my good parts aside I have no other charms.

Quick. Blessing on your heart for't!

Fal. But, I pray thee, tell me this: has Ford's wife and Page's wife acquainted each other how they love me?

Quick. That were a jest indeed! They have not so little grace, I hope. That were a trick indeed! But Mistress Page would desire you to send her your little page, of all loves. Her husband has a marvellous infection to the little page; and truly Master Page is an honest man. Never a wife in Windsor leads a better life than she does: do what she will, say what she will, take all, pay all, go to bed when she list, rise when she list, all is as she will; and truly she deserves it, for if there be a kind woman in Windsor, she is one. You must send her your page; no remedy.

Fal. Why, I will.

Quick. Nay, but do so, then; and, look you, he may come and go between you both; and in any case have a nay-word, that you may know one another's mind, and the boy never need to understand any thing; for 'tis not good that children should know any wickedness. Old folks, you know, have discretion, as they say, and know the world.

Fal. Fare thee well. Commend me to them both. There's my purse; I am yet thy debtor. Boy, go along with this woman. [*Exeunt Mistress Quickly and Robin.*] This news distracts me!

Pist. This punk is one of Cupid's carriers.
Clap on more sails; pursue; up with your fights;
Give fire! She is my prize, or ocean whelm them all! [*Exit.*]

Fal. Say'st thou so, old Jack? Go thy ways. I'll make more of thy old body than I have done. Will they yet look after thee? Wilt thou, after the expense of so much money, be now a gainer? Good body, I thank thee. Let them say 'tis grossly done; so it be fairly done, no matter.

Enter Bardolph.

Bard. Sir John, there's one Master Brook below would fain speak with you, and be acquainted

with you; and hath sent your worship a morning's draught of sack.

Fal. Brook is his name?

Bard. Ay, sir.

Fal. Call him in. [*Exit Bardolph.*] Such Brooks are welcome to me, that o'erflows such liquor. Ah, ha! Mistress Ford and Mistress Page, have I encompass'd you? Go to; via!

Re-enter [*Bardolph, with*] *Ford disguised like Brook.*

Ford. Bless you, sir!

Fal. And you, sir! Would you speak with me?

Ford. I make bold to press with so little preparation upon you.

Fal. You're welcome. What's your will? Give us leave, drawer. [*Exit Bardolph.*]

Ford. Sir, I am a gentleman that have spent much. My name is Brook.

Fal. Good Master Brook, I desire more acquaintance of you.

Ford. Good Sir John, I sue for yours; — not to charge you; for I must let you understand I think myself in better plight for a lender than you are; the which hath something emboldened me to this unseason'd intrusion; for they say, if money go before, all ways do lie open.

Fal. Money is a good soldier, sir, and will on.

Ford. Troth, and I have a bag of money here troubles me. If you will help to bear it, Sir John, take all, or half, for easing me of the carriage.

Fal. Sir, I know not how I may deserve to be your porter.

Ford. I will tell you, sir, if you will give me the hearing.

Fal. Speak, good Master Brook; I shall be glad to be your servant.

Ford. Sir, I hear you are a scholar, — I will be brief with you, — and you have been a man long known to me, though I had never so good means as desire to make myself acquainted with you. I shall discover a thing to you, wherein I must very much lay open mine own imperfection; but, good Sir John, as you have one eye upon my follies, as you hear them unfolded turn another into the register of your own, that I may pass with a reproof the easier, sith you yourself know how easy it is to be such an offender.

Fal. Very well, sir; proceed.

Ford. There is a gentlewoman in this town; her husband's name is Ford.

Fal. Well, sir.

Ford. I have long lov'd her, and I protest to you, bestowed much on her; followed her with a doting observance; engross'd opportunities

to meet her; fee'd every slight occasion that could but niggardly give me sight of her; not only bought many presents to give her, but have given largely to many to know what she would have given; briefly, I have pursu'd her as love hath pursued me; which hath been on the wing of all occasions. But whatsoever I have merited, either in my mind or in my means, meed, I am sure, I have received none; unless experience be a jewel that I have purchased at an infinite rate, and that hath taught me to say this:

"Love like a shadow flies when substance love pursues;
Pursuing that that flies, and flying what pursues."

Fal. Have you receiv'd no promise of satisfaction at her hands?

Ford. Never.

Fal. Have you importun'd her to such a purpose?

Ford. Never.

Fal. Of what quality was your love, then?

Ford. Like a fair house built on another man's ground; so that I have lost my edifice by mistaking the place where I erected it.

Fal. To what purpose have you unfolded this to me?

Ford. When I have told you that, I have told

you all. Some say, that though she appear honest to me, yet in other places she enlargeth her mirth so far that there is shrewd construction made of her. Now, Sir John, here is the heart of my purpose: you are a gentleman of excellent breeding, admirable discourse, of great admittance, authentic in your place and person, generally allow'd for your many war-like, court-like, and learned preparations.

Fal. O, sir!

Ford. Believe it, for you know it. There is money; spend it, spend it; spend more; spend all I have; only give me so much of your time in exchange of it, as to lay an amiable siege to the honesty of this Ford's wife. Use your art of wooing; win her to consent to you; if any man may, you may as soon as any.

Fal. Would it apply well to the vehemency of your affection, that I should win what you would enjoy? Methinks you prescribe to yourself very preposterously.

Ford. O, understand my drift. She dwells so securely on the excellency of her honour, that the folly of my soul dares not present itself. She is too bright to be look'd against. Now, could I come to her with any detection in my hand, my desires had instance and argument to commend themselves. I could drive her then

from the ward of her purity, her reputation, her marriage vow, and a thousand other her defences, which now are too too strongly embattled against me. What say you to't, Sir John?

Fal. Master Brook, I will first make bold with your money; next, give me your hand; and last, as I am a gentleman, you shall, if you will, enjoy Ford's wife.

Ford. O good sir!

Fal. I say you shall.

Ford. Want no money, Sir John; you shall want none.

Fal. Want no Mistress Ford, Master Brook; you shall want none. I shall be with her, I may tell you, by her own appointment; even as you came in to me, her assistant or go-between parted from me. I say I shall be with her between ten and eleven; for at that time the jealous rascally knave her husband will be forth. Come you to me at night; you shall know how I speed.

Ford. I am blest in your acquaintance. Do you know Ford, sir?

Fal. Hang him, poor cuckoldly knave! I know him not. Yet I wrong him to call him poor. They say the jealous wittolly knave hath masses of money; for the which his wife seems to me well-favour'd. I will use her as the

key of the cuckoldly rogue's coffer; and there's my harvest-home.

Ford. I would you knew Ford, sir, that you might avoid him if you saw him.

Fal. Hang him, mechanical salt-butter rogue! I will stare him out of his wits; I will awe him with my cudgel; it shall hang like a meteor o'er the cuckold's horns. Master Brook, thou shalt know I will predominate over the peasant, and thou shalt lie with his wife. Come to me soon at night. Ford's a knave, and I will aggravate his style; thou, Master Brook, shalt know him for knave and cuckold. Come to me soon at night. *Exit.*

Ford. What a damn'd Epicurean rascal is this! My heart is ready to crack with impatience. Who says this is improvident jealousy? My wife hath sent to him; the hour is fix'd; the match is made. Would any man have thought this? See the hell of having a false woman! My bed shall be abus'd, my coffers ransack'd, my reputation gnawn at; and I shall not only receive this villanous wrong, but stand under the adoption of abominable terms, and by him that does me this wrong. Terms! Names! Amaimon sounds well; Lucifer, well; Barbason, well; yet they are devils' additions, the names of fiends; but Cuckold! Wittol! —

Cuckold! The devil himself hath not such a name. Page is an ass, a secure ass. He will trust his wife; he will not be jealous. I will rather trust a Fleming with my butter, Parson Hugh the Welshman with my cheese, an Irishman with my aqua-vitæ bottle, or a thief to walk my ambling gelding, than my wife with herself. Then she plots, then she ruminates, then she devises; and what they think in their hearts they may effect, they will break their hearts but they will effect. God be prais'd for my jealousy! Eleven o'clock the hour. I will prevent this, detect my wife, be reveng'd on Falstaff, and laugh at Page. I will about it; better three hours too soon than a minute too late. Fie, fie, fie! cuckold! cuckold! cuckold! *Exit.*

Scene III

[*A field near Windsor.*]

Enter Caius and Rugby.

Caius. Jack Rugby!

Rug. Sir?

Caius. Vat is the clock, Jack?

Rug. 'Tis past the hour, sir, that Sir Hugh promis'd to meet.

Caius. By gar, he has save his soul, dat he is no come; he has pray his Pible well, dat he is no come. By gar, Jack Rugby, he is dead already, if he be come.

Rug. He is wise, sir; he knew your worship would kill him, if he came.

Caius. By gar, de herring is no dead so as I vill kill him. Take your rapier, Jack; I vill tell you how I vill kill him.

Rug. Alas, sir, I cannot fence.

Caius. Villainy, take your rapier.

Rug. Forbear; here's company.

Enter Host, Shallow, Slender, and Page.

Host. God bless thee, bully doctor!

Shal. God save you, Master Doctor Caius

Page. Now, good Master Doctor!

Slen. Give you good morrow, sir.

Caius. Vat be all you, one, two, tree, four, come for?

Host. To see thee fight, to see thee foin, to see thee traverse; to see thee here, to see thee there; to see thee pass thy punto, thy stock, thy reverse, thy distance, thy montant. Is he dead, my Ethiopian? Is he dead, my Francisco? Ha, bully! What says my Æsculapius? my Galen? my heart of elder? Ha! is he dead, bully stale? Is he dead?

Caius. By gar, he is de coward Jack priest of de vorld; he is not show his face.

Host. Thou art a Castalion-King-Urinal. Hector of Greece, my boy!

Caius. I pray you, bear witness that me have stay six or seven, two, tree hours for him, and he is no come.

Shal. He is the wiser man, Master Doctor. He is a curer of souls, and you a curer of bodies. If you should fight, you go against the hair of your professions. Is it not true, Master Page?

Page. Master Shallow, you have yourself been a great fighter, though now a man of peace.

Shal. Bodykins, Master Page, though I now be old and of the peace, if I see a sword out, my finger itches to make one. Though we are justices and doctors and churchmen, Master Page, we have some salt of our youth in us; we are the sons of women, Master Page.

Page. 'Tis true, Master Shallow.

Shal. It will be found so, Master Page. Master Doctor Caius, I am come to fetch you home. I am sworn of the peace. You have show'd yourself a wise physician, and Sir Hugh hath shown himself a wise and patient churchman. You must go with me, Master Doctor.

Host. Pardon, guest-justice. A word, Mounseur Mockwater.

Caius. Mock-vater! Vat is dat?

Host. Mock-water, in our English tongue, is valour, bully.

Caius. By gar, den, I have as much mock-vater as de Englishman. Scurvy jack-dog priest! By gar, me vill cut his ears.

Host. He will clapper-claw thee tightly, bully.

Caius. Clapper-de-claw! Vat is dat?

Host. That is, he will make thee amends.

Caius. By gar, me do look he shall clapper-de-claw me; for, by gar, me vill have it.

Host. And I will provoke him to't, or let him wag.

Caius. Me tank you for dat.

Host. And, moreover, bully, — but first, master guest, and Master Page, and eke Cavaleiro Slender, go you through the town to Frogmore. [*Aside to them.*]

Page. Sir Hugh is there, is he?

Host. He is there. See what humour he is in; and I will bring the doctor about by the fields. Will it do well?

Shal. We will do it.

Page, Shal., and Slen. Adieu, good Master Doctor. *Exeunt Page, Shal., and Slen.*

Caius. By gar, me vill kill de priest; for he speak for a jack-an-ape to Anne Page.

Host. Let him die; [but first] sheathe thy impatience, throw cold water on thy choler, go about the fields with me through Frogmore. I will bring thee where Mistress Anne Page is, at a farm-house a-feasting; and thou shalt woo her. Cried game, said I well?

Caius. By gar, me dank you vor dat. By gar, I love you; and I shall procure-a you de good guest, de earl, de knight, de lords, de gentlemen, my patients.

Host. For the which I will be thy adversary toward Anne Page. Said I well?

Caius. By gar, 'tis good; vell said.

Host. Let us wag, then.

Caius. Come at my heels, Jack Rugby.

Exeunt.

ACT THIRD

SCENE I

[A field near Frogmore.]

Enter Sir Hugh Evans and Simple.

Evans. I pray you now, good Master Slender's serving-man, and friend Simple by your name, which way have you look'd for Master Caius, that calls himself doctor of physic?

Sim. Marry, sir, the pittie-ward, the park-ward, every way; Old Windsor way, and every way but the town way.

Evans. I most fehemently desire you you will also look that way.

Sim. I will, sir. *[Exit.]*

Evans. Pless my soul, how full of chollors I am, and trempling of mind! I shall be glad if he have deceived me. How melancholies, I am! I will knog his urinals about his knave's costard when I have good opportunities for the ork. Pless my soul! *[Sings.]*

"To shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sings madrigals;
There will we make our peds of roses,
And a thousand fragrant posies.
To shallow" —

Mercy on me! I have a great dispositions to cry.

[*Sings.*]

"Melodious birds sing madrigals" —
"When as I sat in Pabylon" —
"And a thousand vagram posies.
To shallow," etc.

[*Re-enter Simple.*]

Sim. Yonder he is coming; this way, Sir Hugh.
Evans. He's welcome. [*Sings.*]

"To shallow rivers, to whose falls" —

Heaven prosper the right! What weapons is he?
Sim. No weapons, sir. There comes my master, Master Shallow, and another gentleman, from Frogmore, over the stile, this way.
Evans. Pray you, give me my gown; or else keep it in your arms.

Enter Page, Shallow, and Slender.

Shal. How now, Master Parson! Good morrow, good Sir Hugh. Keep a gamester from the dice, and a good student from his book, and it is wonderful.
Slen. [*Aside.*] Ah, sweet Anne Page!
Page. God save you, good Sir Hugh!

Evans. God pless you from his mercy sake, all of you!

Shal. What, the sword and the word! Do you study them both, Master Parson?

Page. And youthful still! In your doublet and hose this raw rheumatic day!

Evans. There is reasons and causes for it.

Page. We are come to you to do a good office, Master Parson.

Evans. Fery well; what is it?

Page. Yonder is a most reverend gentleman, who, belike having received wrong by some person, is at most odds with his own gravity and patience that ever you saw.

Shal. I have lived fourscore years and upward; I never heard a man of his place, gravity, and learning, so wide of his own respect.

Evans. What is he?

Page. I think you know him; Master Doctor Caius, the renowned French physician.

Evans. Got's will, and his passion! Of my heart, I had as lief you would tell me of a mess of porridge.

Page. Why?

Evans. He has no more knowledge in Hibocrates and Galen — and he is a knave besides; a cowardly knave as you would desires to be acquainted withal.

Page. I warrant you, he's the man should fight with him.

Slen. [*Aside.*] O sweet Anne Page!

Enter Host, Caius [*and Rugby*].

Shal. It appears so by his weapons. Keep them asunder; here comes Doctor Caius.

Page. Nay, good Master Parson, keep in your weapon.

Shal. So do you, good Master Doctor.

Host. Disarm them, and let them question. Let them keep their limbs whole and hack our English.

Caius. I pray you, let-a me speak a word with your ear. Vherefore vill you not meet-a me?

Evans. [*Aside to Caius.*] Pray you, use your patience. In good time.

Caius. By gar, you are de coward, de Jack dog, John ape.

Evans. [*Aside to Caius.*] Pray you, let us not be laughing-stocks to other men's humours. I desire you in friendship, and I will one way or other make you amends. [*Aloud.*] I will knog your urinal about your knave's cogscomb [for missing your meetings and appointments].

Caius. Diable! Jack Rugby, — mine host de Jarteer, — have I not stay for him to kill him? Have I not, at de place I did appoint?

Evans. As I am a Christians soul, now look you, this is the place appointed. I'll be judgement by mine host of the Garter.

Host. Peace, I say, Gallia and Gaul, French and Welsh, soul-curer and body-curer!

Caius. Ay, dat is very good; excellent.

Host. Peace, I say! hear mine host of the Garter. Am I politic? Am I subtle? Am I a Machiavel? Shall I lose my doctor? No; he gives me the potions and the motions. Shall I lose my parson, my priest, my Sir Hugh? No; he gives me the proverbs and the noverbs. [Give me thy hand, terrestrial; so.] Give me thy hand, celestial; so. Boys of art, I have deceiv'd you both; I have directed you to wrong places. Your hearts are mighty, your skins are whole, and let burnt sack be the issue. Come, lay their swords to pawn. Follow me, lad of peace; follow, follow, follow.

Exit Host.

Shal. Trust me, a mad host. Follow, gentlemen, follow.

Slen. [*Aside.*] O sweet Anne Page!

[*Exeunt Shal., Slen., and Page*]

Caius. Ha, do I perceive dat? Have you make-a de sot of us, ha, ha?

Evans. This is well; he has made us his vlouting-stog. I desire you that we may be friends;

and let us knog our prains together to be revenge on this same scall, scurvy, cogging companion, the host of the Garter.

Caius. By gar, with all my heart. He promise to bring me where is Anne Page; by gar, he deceive me too.

Evans. Well, I will smite his noddles. Pray you, follow. *Exeunt.*

Scene II

[*A street.*]

Enter Mistress Page and Robin.

Mrs. Page. Nay, keep your way, little gallant; you were wont to be a follower, but now you are a leader. Whether had you rather lead mine eyes, or eye your master's heels?

Rob. I had rather, forsooth, go before you like a man than follow him like a dwarf.

Mrs. Page. O, you are a flattering boy. Now I see you'll be a courtier.

[*Enter Ford.*]

Ford. Well met, Mistress Page. Whither go you?

Mrs. Page. Truly, sir, to see your wife. Is she at home?

Ford. Ay; and as idle as she may hang together, for want of company. I think, if your husbands were dead, you two would marry.

Mrs. Page. Be sure of that, — two other husbands.

Ford. Where had you this pretty weathercock?

Mrs. Page. I cannot tell what the dickens his name is my husband had him of. What do you call your knight's name, sirrah!

Rob. Sir John Falstaff.

Ford. Sir John Falstaff!

Mrs. Page. He, he; I can never hit on's name. There is such a league between my good man and he! Is your wife at home indeed?

Ford. Indeed she is.

Mrs. Page. By your leave, sir. I am sick till I see her. [*Exeunt Mrs. Page and Robin.*]

Ford. Has Page any brains? Hath he any eyes? Hath he any thinking? Sure, they sleep; he hath no use of them. Why, this boy will carry a letter twenty mile, as easy as a cannon will shoot point-blank twelve score. He pieces out his wife's inclination; he gives her folly motion and advantage; and now she's going to my wife, and Falstaff's boy with her. A man may hear this shower sing in the wind. And Falstaff's boy with her! Good plots, they are laid; and our revolted wives share damnation

together. Well; I will take him, then torture my wife, pluck the borrowed veil of modesty from the so seeming Mistress Page, divulge Page himself for a secure and wilful Actæon; and to these violent proceedings all my neighbours shall cry aim. [*Clock heard.*] The clock gives me my cue, and my assurance bids me search. There I shall find Falstaff. I shall be rather prais'd for this than mock'd, for it is as positive as the earth is firm that Falstaff is there. I will go.

[*Enter Page, Shallow, Slender, Host, Sir Hugh Evans, Caius, and Rugby.*]

Shal., Page, etc. Well met, Master Ford.

Ford. Trust me, a good knot. I have good cheer at home, and I pray you all go with me.

Shal. I must excuse myself, Master Ford.

Slen. And so must I, sir. We have appointed to dine with Mistress Anne, and I would not break with her for more money than I'll speak of.

Shal. We have linger'd about a match between Anne Page and my cousin Slender, and this day we shall have our answer.

Slen. I hope I have your good will, father Page.

Page. You have, Master Slender; I stand wholly for you: but my wife, Master Doctor, is for you altogether.

Caius. Ay, be-gar; and de maid is love-a me. My nursh-a Quickly tell me so mush.

Host. What say you to young Master Fenton? He capers, he dances, he has eyes of youth, he writes verses, he speaks holiday, he smells April and May. He will carry't, he will carry 't; 'tis in his buttons; he will carry't.

Page. Not by my consent, I promise you. The gentleman is of no having. He kept company with the wild Prince and Poins; he is of too high a region; he knows too much. No, he shall not knit a knot in his fortunes with the finger of my substance. If he take her, let him take her simply. The wealth I have waits on my consent, and my consent goes not that way.

Ford. I beseech you heartily, some of you go home with me to dinner. Besides your cheer, you shall have sport; I will show you a monster. Master Doctor, you shall go; so shall you, Master Page; and you, Sir Hugh.

Shal. Well, fare you well. We shall have the freer wooing at Master Page's.

Exeunt Shal. and Slen.

Caius. Go home, John Rugby; I come anon.

[*Exit Rugby.*]

Host. Farewell, my hearts. I will to my honest knight Falstaff, and drink canary with him.

Exit.

Ford. [*Aside.*] I think I shall drink in pipe-wine first with him; I'll make him dance. Will you go, gentles?

All. Have with you to see this monster.

Exeunt.

Scene III

[*A room in Ford's house.*]

Enter Mistress Ford and Mistress Page.

Mrs. Ford. What, John! What, Robert!

Mrs. Page. Quickly, quickly! Is the buck-basket —

Mrs. Ford. I warrant. What, Robin, I say!

[*Enter Servants with a basket.*]

Mrs. Page. Come, come, come.

Mrs. Ford. Here, set it down.

Mrs. Page. Give your men the charge; we must be brief.

Mrs. Ford. Marry, as I told you before, John and Robert, be ready here hard by in the brew-house; and when I suddenly call you, come forth, and without any pause or staggering take this basket on your shoulders. That done, trudge with it in all haste, and carry it among the whitsters in Datchet-mead, and

there empty it in the muddy ditch close by the Thames side.

Mrs. Page. You will do it?

Mrs. Ford. I ha' told them over and over; they lack no direction. Be gone, and come when you are call'd. *Exeunt Servants.*

Mrs. Page. Here comes little Robin.

[*Enter Robin.*]

Mrs. Ford. How now, my eyas-musket! what news with you?

Rob. My master, Sir John, is come in at your back-door, Mistress Ford, and requests your company.

Mrs. Page. You little Jack-a-Lent, have you been true to us?

Rob. Ay, I'll be sworn. My master knows not of your being here and hath threat'ned to put me into everlasting liberty if I tell you of it; for he swears he'll turn me away.

Mrs. Page. Thou'rt a good boy. This secrecy of thine shall be a tailor to thee and shall make thee a new doublet and hose. I'll go hide me.

Mrs. Ford. Do so. Go tell thy master I am alone. [*Exit Robin.*] Mistress Page, remember you your cue.

Mrs. Page. I warrant thee; if I do not act it, hiss me. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. Ford. Go to, then. We'll use this unwholesome humidity, this gross watery pumpion. We'll teach him to know turtles from jays.

Enter Falstaff.

Fal. "Have I caught" thee, "my heavenly jewel?" Why, now let me die, for I have liv'd long enough. This is the period of my ambition. O this blessed hour!

Mrs. Ford. O sweet Sir John!

Fal. Mistress Ford, I cannot cog, I cannot prate, Mistress Ford. Now shall I sin in my wish: I would thy husband were dead. I'll speak it before the best lord; I would make thee my lady.

Mrs. Ford. I your lady, Sir John! Alas, I should be a pitiful lady!

Fal. Let the court of France show me such another. I see how thine eye would emulate the diamond. Thou hast the right arched beauty of the brow that becomes the ship-tire, the tire-valiant, or any tire of Venetian admittance.

Mrs. Ford. A plain kerchief, Sir John. My brows become nothing else; nor that well neither.

Fal. [By the Lord,] thou art a tyrant to say so. Thou wouldst make an absolute courtier; and the firm fixture of thy foot would give an excellent motion to thy gait in a semi-circled farthingale. I see what thou wert, if Fortune thy foe were not, Nature thy friend. Come, thou canst not hide it.

Mrs. Ford. Believe me, there's no such thing in me.

Fal. What made me love thee? Let that persuade thee there's something extraordinary in thee. Come, I cannot cog and say thou art this and that, like a many of these lisping hawthorn-buds, that come like women in men's apparel, and smell like Bucklersbury in simple time; I cannot; but I love thee, none but thee, and thou deserv'st it.

Mrs. Ford. Do not betray me, sir. I fear you love Mistress Page.

Fal. Thou mightst as well say I love to walk by the Counter-gate, which is as hateful to me as the reek of a lime-kiln.

Mrs. Ford. Well, heaven knows how I love you; and you shall one day find it.

Fal. Keep in that mind; I'll deserve it.

Mrs. Ford. Nay, I must tell you, so you do; or else I could not be in that mind.

Rob. [*Within.*] Mistress Ford, Mistress Ford!

here's Mistress Page at the door, sweating, and blowing, and looking wildly, and would needs speak with you presently.

Fal. She shall not see me. I will ensconce me behind the arras.

Mrs. Ford. Pray you, do so; she's a very tattling woman.

Falstaff stands behind the arras.

[*Re-enter Mistress Page and Robin.*]

What's the matter? How now!

Mrs. Page. O Mistress Ford, what have you done? You're sham'd, you're overthrown, you're undone for ever!

Mrs. Ford. What's the matter, good Mistress Page?

Mrs. Page. O well-a-day, Mistress Ford! having an honest man to your husband, to give him such cause of suspicion!

Mrs. Ford. What cause of suspicion?

Mrs. Page. What cause of suspicion! Out upon you! How am I mistook in you!

Mrs. Ford. Why, alas, what's the matter?

Mrs. Page. Your husband's coming hither, woman, with all the officers in Windsor, to search for a gentleman that he says is here now in the house by your consent, to take an ill advantage of his absence. You are undone.

Mrs. Ford. 'Tis not so, I hope.

Mrs. Page. Pray heaven it be not so, that you have such a man here, but 'tis most certain your husband's coming, with half Windsor at his heels, to search for such a one. I come before to tell you. If you know yourself clear, why, I am glad of it; but if you have a friend here, convey, convey him out. Be not amaz'd, call all your senses to you, defend your reputation, or bid farewell to your good life forever.

Mrs. Ford. What shall I do? There is a gentleman my dear friend; and I fear not mine own shame so much as his peril. I had rather than a thousand pound he were out of the house.

Mrs. Page. For shame! never stand "you had rather" and "you had rather." Your husband's here at hand. Bethink you of some conveyance. In the house you cannot hide him. O, how have you deceiv'd me! Look, here is a basket. If he be of any reasonable stature, he may creep in here; and throw foul linen upon him, as if it were going to bucking, or — it is whiting-time — send him by your two men to Datchet-mead.

Mrs. Ford. He's too big to go in there. What shall I do?

Fal. [*Coming forward.*] Let me see't, let me see't,

O, let me see't! I'll in, I'll in. Follow your friend's counsel. I'll in.

Mrs. Page. What, Sir John Falstaff! Are these your letters, knight?

Fal. I love thee. Help me away. Let me creep in here. I'll never —

Gets into the basket; they put clothes over him.

Mrs. Page. Help to cover your master, boy. Call your men, Mistress Ford. You dissembling knight!

Mrs. Ford. What, John! Robert! John!

[*Exit Robin.*]

[*Re-enter Servants.*]

Go take up these clothes here quickly. Where's the cowl-staff? Look, how you drumble! Carry them to the laundress in Datchet-mead; quickly, come.

[*Enter Ford, Page, Caius, and Sir Hugh Evans.*]

Ford. Pray you, come near. If I suspect without cause, why then make sport at me; then let me be your jest; I deserve it. How now! whither bear you this?

Serv. To the laundress, forsooth.

Mrs. Ford. Why, what have you to do whither they bear it? You were best meddle with buck-washing.

Ford. Buck! I would I could wash myself of the buck! Buck, buck, buck! Ay, buck; I warrant you, buck, and of the season too, it shall appear. [*Exeunt Servants with the basket.*] Gentlemen, I have dream'd to-night; I'll tell you my dream. Here, here, here be my keys. Ascend my chambers, search, seek, find out. I'll warrant we'll unkennel the fox. Let me stop this way first. [*Locking the door.*] So, now uncape.

Page. Good Master Ford, be contented. You wrong yourself too much.

Ford. True, Master Page. Up, gentlemen; you shall see sport anon. Follow me, gentlemen. [*Exit.*]

Evans. This is fery fantastical humours and jealousies.

Caius. By gar, 'tis no the fashion of France; it is not jealous in France.

Page. Nay, follow him, gentlemen; see the issue of his search.

[*Exeunt Page, Caius, and Evans.*]

Mrs. Page. Is there not a double excellency in this?

Mrs. Ford. I know not which pleases me better, that my husband is deceived, or Sir John.

Mrs. Page. What a taking was he in when your husband ask'd who was in the basket!

Mrs. Ford. I am half afraid he will have need of washing, so throwing him into the water will do him a benefit.

Mrs. Page. Hang him, dishonest rascal! I would all of the same strain were in the same distress.

Mrs. Ford. I think my husband hath some special suspicion of Falstaff's being here; for I never saw him so gross in his jealousy till now.

Mrs. Page. I will lay a plot to try that; and we will yet have more tricks with Falstaff. His dissolute disease will scarce obey this medicine.

Mrs. Ford. Shall we send that foolish carrion, Mistress Quickly, to him, and excuse his throwing into the water; and give him another hope, to betray him to another punishment?

Mrs. Page. We will do it. Let him be sent for to-morrow, eight o'clock, to have amends.

[*Re-enter Ford, Page, Caius, and Sir Hugh Evans.*]

Ford. I cannot find him. May be the knave bragg'd of that he could not compass.

Mrs. Page. [*Aside to Mrs. Ford.*] Heard you that?

Mrs. Ford. You use me well, Master Ford, do you?

Ford. Ay, I do so.

Mrs. Ford. Heaven make you better than your thoughts!

Ford. Amen!

Mrs. Page. You do yourself mighty wrong, Master Ford.

Ford. Ay, ay; I must bear it.

Evans. If there be any pody in the house, and in the chambers, and in the coffers, and in the presses, heaven forgive my sins at the day of judgement!

Caius. By gar, nor I too; there is no bodies.

Page. Fie, fie, Master Ford! are you not asham'd? What spirit, what devil suggests this imagination? I would not ha' your distemper in this kind for the wealth of Windsor Castle.

Ford. 'Tis my fault, Master Page. I suffer for it.

Evans. You suffer for a pad conscience. Your wife is as honest a 'omans as I will desires among five thousand, and five hundred too.

Caius. By gar, I see 'tis an honest woman.

Ford. Well, I promis'd you a dinner. Come, come, walk in the Park. I pray you, pardon me. I will hereafter make known to you why I have done this. Come, wife; come, Mistress Page. I pray you, pardon me; pray heartily, pardon me.

Page. Let's go in, gentlemen; but, trust me,

we'll mock him. I do invite you to-morrow morning to my house to breakfast; after, we'll a-birding together. I have a fine hawk for the bush. Shall it be so?

Ford. Anything.

Evans. If there is one, I shall make two in the company.

Caius. If dere be one or two, I shall make-a the turd.

Ford. Pray you, go, Master Page.

Evans. I pray you now, remembrance to-morrow on the lousy knave, mine host.

Caius. Dat is good; by gar, with all my heart!

Evans. A lousy knave, to have his gibes and his mockeries!

Exeunt.

Scene IV

[*A room in Page's house.*]

Enter Fenton and Anne Page.

Fent. I see I cannot get thy father's love,
Therefore no more turn me to him, sweet Nan.

Anne. Alas, how then?

Fent. Why, thou must be thyself.
He doth object I am too great of birth;
And that, my state being gall'd with my expense,
I seek to heal it only by his wealth.

Besides these, other bars he lays before me,
My riots past, my wild societies;
And tells me 'tis a thing impossible
I should love thee but as a property.

Anne. May be he tells you true.

Fent. No, heaven so speed me in my time to come!
Albeit I will confess thy father's wealth
Was the first motive that I woo'd thee, Anne;
Yet, wooing thee, I found thee of more value
Than stamps in gold or sums in sealed bags;
And 'tis the very riches of thyself
That now I aim at.

Anne. Gentle Master Fenton,
Yet seek my father's love; still seek it, sir.
If opportunity and humblest suit
Cannot attain it, why, then, — hark you hither!
[*They converse apart.*]

[*Enter Shallow, Slender, and Mistress Quickly.*]

Shal. Break their talk, Mistress Quickly. My kinsman shall speak for himself.

Slen. I'll make a shaft or a bolt on't. 'Slid, 'tis but venturing.

Shal. Be not dismay'd.

Slen. No, she shall not dismay me. I care not for that, but that I am afeared.

Quick. Hark ye; Master Slender would speak a word with you.

Anne. I come to him. [*Aside.*] This is my father's choice.
O, what a world of vile ill-favoured faults
Looks handsome in three hundred pounds a-year!

Quick. And how does good Master Fenton? Pray you, a word with you.

Shal. She's coming; to her, coz. O boy, thou hadst a father!

Slen. I had a father, Mistress Anne; my uncle can tell you good jests of him. Pray you, uncle, tell Mistress Anne the jest, how my father stole two geese out of a pen, good uncle.

Shal. Mistress Anne, my cousin loves you.

Slen. Ay, that I do; as well as I love any woman in Gloucestershire.

Shal. He will maintain you like a gentlewoman.

Slen. Ay, that I will, come cut and long-tail under the degree of a squire.

Shal. He will make you a hundred and fifty pounds jointure.

Anne. Good Master Shallow, let him woo for himself.

Shal. Marry, I thank you for it; I thank you for that good comfort. She calls you, coz. I'll leave you.

Anne. Now, Master Slender, —

Slen. Now, good Mistress Anne, —

Anne. What is your will?

Slen. My will! 'Od's heartlings, that's a pretty jest indeed! I ne'er made my will yet, I thank heaven. I am not such a sickly creature, I give heaven praise.

Anne. I mean, Master Slender, what would you with me?

Slen. Truly, for mine own part, I would little or nothing with you. Your father and my uncle hath made motions. If it be my luck, so; if not, happy man be his dole! They can tell you how things go better than I can. You may ask your father; here he comes.

[*Enter Page and Mistress Page.*]

Page. Now, Master Slender. Love him, daughter Anne. Why, how now! What does Master Fenton here? You wrong me, sir, thus still to haunt my house. I told you, sir, my daughter is dispos'd of.

Fent. Nay, Master Page, be not impatient.

Mrs. Page. Good Master Fenton, come not to my child.

Page. She is no match for you.

Fent. Sir, will you hear me?

Page. No, good Master Fenton. Come, Master Shallow; come, son Slender, in. Knowing my mind, you wrong me, Master Fenton. [*Exeunt Page, Shal., and Slen.*]

Quick. Speak to Mistress Page.

Fent. Good Mistress Page, for that I love your daughter
In such a righteous fashion as I do,
Perforce, against all checks, rebukes, and manners,
I must advance the colours of my love
And not retire. Let me have your good will.

Anne. Good mother, do not marry me to yond fool.

Mrs. Page. I mean it not; I seek you a better husband.

Quick. That's my master, Master Doctor.

Anne. Alas, I had rather be set quick i' the earth
And bowl'd to death with turnips!

Mrs. Page. Come, trouble not yourself. Good Master Fenton,
I will not be your friend nor enemy.
My daughter will I question how she loves you,
And as I find her, so am I affected.
Till then farewell, sir; she must needs go in.
Her father will be angry.

Fent. Farewell, gentle mistress; farewell, Nan.

[*Exeunt Mrs. Page and Anne.*]

Quick. This is my doing, now. "Nay," said I, "will you cast away your child on a fool, and a physician? Look on Master Fenton." This is my doing.

Fent. I thank thee; and I pray thee, once to-night
Give my sweet Nan this ring. There's for thy
pains.

Quick. Now heaven send thee good fortune! [*Exit Fenton.*] A kind heart he hath. A woman would run through fire and water for such a kind heart. But yet I would my master had Mistress Anne; or I would Master Slender had her; or, in sooth, I would Master Fenton had her. I will do what I can for them all three; for so I have promis'd, and I'll be as good as my word; but speciously for Master Fenton. Well, I must of another errand to Sir John Falstaff from my two mistresses. What a beast am I to slack it! *Exit.*

Scene V

[*A room in the Garter Inn.*]

Enter Falstaff and Bardolph.

Fal. Bardolph, I say!

Bard. Here, sir.

Fal. Go fetch me a quart of sack. Put a toast in't. [*Exit Bard.*] Have I liv'd to be carried in a basket, and to be thrown in the Thames like a barrow of butcher's offal? Well, if I be serv'd such another trick, I'll have my

brains ta'en out and butter'd, and give them to a dog for a new-year's gift. The rogues slided me into the river with as little remorse as they would have drown'd a blind bitch's puppies, fifteen i' the litter; and you may know by my size that I have a kind of alacrity in sinking. If the bottom were as deep as hell, I should down. I had been drown'd, but that the shore was shelvy and shallow,—a death that I abhor; for the water swells a man; and what a thing should I have been when I had been swell'd! I should have been a mountain of mummy.

[*Re-enter Bardolph, with sack.*]

Bard. Here's Mistress Quickly, sir, to speak with you.

Fal. Come, let me pour in some sack to the Thames water; for my belly's as cold as if I had swallow'd snowballs for pills to cool the reins. Call her in.

Bard. Come in, woman!

Enter Mistress Quickly.

Quick. By your leave; I cry you mercy. Give your worship good morrow.

Fal. Take away these chalices. Go brew me a pottle of sack finely.

Bard. With eggs, sir?

Fal. Simple of itself, I'll no pullet-sperm in my brewage. [*Exit Bardolph.*] How now?

Quick. Marry, sir, I come to your worship from Mistress Ford.

Fal. Mistress Ford! I have had ford enough. I was thrown into the ford; I have my belly full of ford.

Quick. Alas the day! Good heart, that was not her fault. She does so take on with her men; they mistook their erection.

Fal. So did I mine, to build upon a foolish woman's promise.

Quick. Well, she laments, sir, for it, that it would yearn your heart to see it. Her husband goes this morning a-birding. She desires you once more to come to her between eight and nine. I must carry her word quickly. She'll make you amends, I warrant you.

Fal. Well, I will visit her. Tell her so; and bid her think what a man is. Let her consider his frailty, and then judge of my merit.

Quick. I will tell her.

Fal. Do so. Between nine and ten, say'st thou?

Quick. Eight and nine, sir.

Fal. Well, be gone. I will not miss her.

Quick. Peace be with you, sir. *Exit.*

Fal. I marvel I hear not of Master Brook; he

sent me word to stay within. I like his money well. O, here he comes.

Enter Ford.

Ford. Bless you, sir!

Fal. Now, Master Brook, you come to know what hath pass'd between me and Ford's wife?

Ford. That, indeed, Sir John, is my business.

Fal. Master Brook, I will not lie to you. I was at her house the hour she appointed me.

Ford. And sped you, sir?

Fal. Very ill-favouredly, Master Brook.

Ford. How so, sir? Did she change her determination?

Fal. No, Master Brook; but the peaking cornuto her husband, Master Brook, dwelling in a continual 'larum of jealousy, comes me in the instant of our encounter, after we had embrac'd, kiss'd, protested, and, as it were, spoke the prologue of our comedy; and at his heels a rabble of his companions, thither provoked and instigated by his distemper, and, forsooth, to search his house for his wife's love.

Ford. What, while you were there?

Fal. While I was there.

Ford. And did he search for you, and could not find you?

Fal. You shall hear. As good luck would have

it, comes in one Mistress Page; gives intelligence of Ford's approach; and, in her invention and Ford's wife's distraction, they convey'd me into a buck-basket.

Ford. A buck-basket!

Fal. [By the Lord,] a buck-basket! Ramm'd me in with foul shirts and smocks, socks, foul stockings, greasy napkins; that, Master Brook, there was the rankest compound of villanous smell that ever offended nostril.

Ford. And how long lay you there?

Fal. Nay, you shall hear, Master Brook, what I have suffer'd to bring this woman to evil for your good. Being thus cramm'd in the basket, a couple of Ford's knaves, his hinds, were call'd forth by their mistress to carry me in the name of foul clothes to Datchet-lane. They took me on their shoulders; met the jealous knave their master in the door, who ask'd them once or twice what they had in their basket. I quak'd for fear, lest the lunatic knave would have search'd it; but fate, ordaining he should be a cuckold, held his hand. Well, on went he for a search, and away went I for foul clothes. But mark the sequel, Master Brook. I suffered the pangs of three several deaths; first, an intolerable fright, to be detected with a jealous rotten bell-

wether; next, to be compass'd, like a good bilbo, in the circumference of a peck, hilt to point, heel to head; and then, to be stopp'd in, like a strong distillation, with stinking clothes that fretted in their own grease. Think of that, — a man of my kidney, — think of that, — that am as subject to heat as butter; a man of continual dissolution and thaw, — it was a miracle to scape suffocation. And in the height of this bath, when I was more than half stew'd in grease, like a Dutch dish, to be thrown into the Thames, and cool'd, glowing hot, in that surge, like a horse-shoe; think of that, — hissing hot, — think of that, Master Brook.

Ford. In good sadness, sir, I am sorry that for my sake you have suffer'd all this. My suit then is desperate; you'll undertake her no more?

Fal. Master Brook, I will be thrown into Etna, as I have been into Thames, ere I will leave her thus. Her husband is this morning gone a-birding. I have received from her another embassy of meeting. 'Twixt eight and nine is the hour, Master Brook.

Ford. 'Tis past eight already, sir.

Fal. Is it? I will then address me to my appointment. Come to me at your convenient leisure, and you shall know how I speed; and

the conclusion shall be crowned with your enjoying her. Adieu. You shall have her, Master Brook. Master Brook, you shall cuckold Ford. *Exit.*

Ford. Hum! ha! is this a vision? Is this a dream? Do I sleep? Master Ford, awake! awake. Master Ford! there's a hole made in your best coat, Master Ford. This 'tis to be married! This 'tis to have linen and buck-baskets! Well, I will proclaim myself what I am. I will now take the lecher; he is at my house; he cannot scape me; 'tis impossible he should. He cannot creep into a halfpenny purse, nor into a pepper-box; but, lest the devil that guides him should aid him, I will search impossible places. Though what I am I cannot avoid, yet to be what I would not shall not make me tame. If I have horns to make one mad, let the proverb go with me: I'll be horn mad. *Exit.*

ACT FOURTH

SCENE I

[*A street.*]

Enter Mistress Page, Mistress Quickly, and William.

Mrs. Page. Is he at Master Ford's already, think'st thou?

Quick. Sure he is by this, or will be presently. But, truly, he is very courageous mad about his throwing into the water. Mistress Ford desires you to come suddenly.

Mrs. Page. I'll be with her by and by; I'll but bring my young man here to school.

[*Enter Sir Hugh Evans.*]

Look, where his master comes; 'tis a playing-day, I see. How now, Sir Hugh! no school to-day?

Evans. No; Master Slender is let the boys leave to play.

Quick. Blessing of his heart!

Mrs. Page. Sir Hugh, my husband says my son profits nothing in the world at his book. I pray you, ask him some questions in his accidence.

Evans. Come hither, William; hold up your head; come.

Mrs. Page. Come on, sirrah, hold up your head. Answer your master, be not afraid.

Evans. William, how many numbers is in nouns?

Will. Two.

Quick. Truly, I thought there had been one number more, because they say, "'Od's nouns."

Evans. Peace your tattlings! What is "fair," William?

Will. Pulcher.

Quick. Polecats! There are fairer things than polecats, sure.

Evans. You are a very simplicity 'oman. I pray you, peace. What is *lapis*, William?

Will. A stone.

Evans. And what is "a stone," William?

Will. A pebble.

Evans. No, it is *lapis*. I pray you, remember in your prain.

Will. Lapis.

Evans. That is a good William. What is he, William, that does lend articles?

Will. Articles are borrowed of the pronoun, and be thus declined, *Singulariter, nominativo, hic, hæc, hoc.*

Evans. Nominativo, hig, hag, hog; pray you, mark; *genitivo, hujus.* Well, what is your accusative case?

Will. *Accusativo, hinc.*

Evans. I pray you, have your remembrance, child. *Accusativo, hing, hang, hog.*

Quick. "Hang-hog" is Latin for bacon, I warrant you.

Evans. Leave your prabbles, 'oman. What is the focative case, William?

Will. O, — *vocativo, O.*

Evans. Remember, William; focative is *caret.*

Quick. And that's a good root.

Evans. 'Oman, forbear.

Mrs. Page. Peace!

Evans. What is your genitive case plural, William?

Will. Genitive case?

Evans. Ay.

Will. Genitive, *horum, harum, horum.*

Quick. Vengeance of Jenny's case! Fie on her! Never name her, child, if she be a whore.

Evans. For shame, 'oman.

Quick. You do ill to teach the child such words. He teaches him to hick and to hack, which they'll do fast enough of themselves, and to call "horum," — fie upon you!

Evans. 'Oman, art thou lunatics? Hast thou no understandings for thy cases and the numbers of the genders? Thou art as foolish Christian creatures as I would desires.

Mrs. Page. Prithee, hold thy peace.

Evans. Show me now, William, some declensions of your pronouns.

Will. Forsooth, I have forgot.

Evans. It is *qui, quæ, quod:* if you forget your *quies*, your *quæs*, and your *quods*, you must be preeches. Go your ways, and play; go.

Mrs. Page. He is a better scholar than I thought he was.

Evans. He is a good sprag memory. Farewell, Mistress Page.

Mrs. Page. Adieu, good Sir Hugh. [*Exit Sir Hugh.*] Get you home, boy. Come, we stay too long. *Exeunt.*

Scene II

[*A room in Ford's house.*]

Enter Falstaff and Mistress Ford.

Fal. Mistress Ford, your sorrow hath eaten up my sufferance. I see you are obsequious in your love, and I profess requital to a hair's breadth; not only, Mistress Ford, in the simple office of love, but in all the accoutrement, complement, and ceremony of it. But are you sure of your husband now?

Mrs. Ford. He's a-birding, sweet Sir John.

Mrs. Page. [*Within.*] What, ho, gossip Ford! What, ho!

Mrs. Ford. Step into the chamber, Sir John.

[*Exit Falstaff.*]

[*Enter Mistress Page.*]

Mrs. Page. How now, sweetheart! who's at home besides yourself?

Mrs. Ford. Why, none but mine own people.

Mrs. Page. Indeed!

Mrs. Ford. No, certainly. [*Aside to her.*] Speak louder.

Mrs. Page. Truly, I am so glad you have nobody here.

Mrs. Ford. Why?

Mrs. Page. Why, woman, your husband is in his old lines again. He so takes on yonder with my husband; so rails against all married mankind; so curses all Eve's daughters, of what complexion soever; and so buffets himself on the forehead, crying, "Peer out, peer out!" that any madness I ever yet beheld seemed but tameness, civility, and patience, to this his distemper he is in now. I am glad the fat knight is not here.

Mrs. Ford. Why, does he talk of him?

Mrs. Page. Of none but him; and swears he was carried out, the last time he search'd for him, in a basket; protests to my husband he is

now here, and hath drawn him and the rest of their company from their sport, to make another experiment of his suspicion. But I am glad the knight is not here. Now he shall see his own foolery.

Mrs. Ford. How near is he, Mistress Page?

Mrs. Page. Hard by; at street end. He will be here anon.

Mrs. Ford. I am undone! The knight is here.

Mrs. Page. Why then you are utterly sham'd, and he's but a dead man. What a woman are you! — Away with him, away with him! Better shame than murder.

Mrs. Ford. Which way should he go? How should I bestow him? Shall I put him into the basket again?

[*Re-enter Falstaff.*]

Fal. No, I'll come no more i' the basket. May I not go out ere he come?

Mrs. Page. Alas, three of Master Ford's brothers watch the door with pistols, that none shall issue out; otherwise you might slip away ere he came. But what make you here?

Fal. What shall I do? I'll creep up into the chimney.

Mrs. Ford. There they always use to discharge their birding-pieces. Creep into the kiln-hole.

Fal. Where is it?

Mrs. Ford. He will seek there, on my word. Neither press, coffer, chest, trunk, well, vault, but he hath an abstract for the remembrance of such places, and goes to them by his note. There is no hiding you in the house.

Fal. I'll go out then.

[*Mrs. Page.*] If you go out in your own semblance, you die, Sir John. Unless you go out disguis'd —

Mrs. Ford. How might we disguise him?

Mrs. Page. Alas the day, I know not! There is no woman's gown big enough for him; otherwise he might put on a hat, a muffler, and a kerchief, and so escape.

Fal. Good hearts, devise something. Any extremity rather than a mischief.

Mrs. Ford. My maid's aunt, the fat woman of Brainford, has a gown above.

Mrs. Page. On my word, it will serve him. She's as big as he is; and there's her thrumm'd hat and her muffler too. Run up, Sir John.

Mrs. Ford. Go, go, sweet Sir John. Mistress Page and I will look some linen for your head.

Mrs. Page. Quick, quick! we'll come dress you straight. Put on the gown the while.

[*Exit Falstaff.*]

Mrs. Ford. I would my husband would meet him

in this shape. He cannot abide the old woman of Brainford. He swears she's a witch; forbade her my house, and hath threat'ned to beat her.

Mrs. Page. Heaven guide him to thy husband's cudgel, and the devil guide his cudgel afterwards!

Mrs. Ford. But is my husband coming?

Mrs. Page. Ay, in good sadness, is he; and talks of the basket too, howsoever he hath had intelligence.

Mrs. Ford. We'll try that; for I'll appoint my men to carry the basket again, to meet him at the door with it, as they did last time.

Mrs. Page. Nay, but he'll be here presently. Let's go dress him like the witch of Brainford.

Mrs. Ford. I'll first direct my men what they shall do with the basket. Go up; I'll bring linen for him straight. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. Page. Hang him, dishonest varlet! We cannot misuse him enough.
We'll leave a proof, by that which we will do,
Wives may be merry, and yet honest too.
We do not act that often jest and laugh;
'Tis old, but true, Still swine eats all the draff.
[*Exit.*]

[*Re-enter Mistress Ford with two Servants.*]

Mrs. Ford. Go, sirs, take the basket again on your shoulders. Your master is hard at

door. If he bid you set it down, obey him. Quickly, dispatch. [*Exit.*]

1. Serv. Come, come, take it up.

2. Serv. Pray heaven it be not full of knight again.

1. Serv. I hope not; I had as lief bear so much lead.

Enter Ford, Page, Shallow [*Caius*], *and Sir Hugh Evans.*

Ford. Ay, but if it prove true, Master Page, have you any way then to unfool me again? Set down the basket, villain! Somebody call my wife. Youth in a basket! O you panderly rascals! there's a knot, a ging, a pack, a conspiracy against me. Now shall the devil be sham'd. What, wife, I say! Come, come forth! Behold what honest clothes you send forth to bleaching!

Page. Why, this passes, Master Ford. You are not to go loose any longer; you must be pinion'd.

Evans. Why, this is lunatics! This is mad as a mad dog!

Shal. Indeed, Master Ford, this is not well, indeed.

Ford. So say I too, sir.

[*Re-enter Mistress Ford.*]

Come hither, Mistress Ford; Mistress Ford, the honest woman, the modest wife, the vir-

tuous creature, that hath the jealous fool to her husband! I suspect without cause, mistress, do I?

Mrs. Ford. Heaven be my witness you do, if you suspect me in any dishonesty.

Ford. Well said, brazen-face! hold it out. Come forth, sirrah!

[*Pulling clothes out of the basket.*]

Page. This passes!

Mrs. Ford. Are you not asham'd? Let the clothes alone.

Ford. I shall find you anon.

Evans. 'Tis unreasonable! Will you take up your wife's clothes? Come away.

Ford. Empty the basket, I say!

Mrs. Ford. Why, man, why?

Ford. Master Page, as I am a man, there was one convey'd out of my house yesterday in this basket. Why may not he be there again? In my house I am sure he is. My intelligence is true; my jealousy is reasonable. Pluck me out all the linen.

Mrs. Ford. If you find a man there, he shall die a flea's death.

Page. Here's no man.

Shal. By my fidelity, this is not well, Master Ford; this wrongs you.

Evans. Master Ford, you must pray, and not

follow the imaginations of your own heart. This is jealousies.

Ford. Well, he's not here I seek for.

Page. No, nor nowhere else but in your brain.

Ford. Help to search my house this one time. If I find not what I seek, show no colour for my extremity, let me forever be your table-sport. Let them say of me, "As jealous as Ford, that search'd a hollow walnut for his wife's leman." Satisfy me once more; once more search with me.

Mrs. Ford. What, ho, Mistress Page! come you and the old woman down; my husband will come into the chamber.

Ford. Old woman! What old woman's that?

Mrs. Ford. Why, it is my maid's aunt of Brainford.

Ford. A witch, a quean, an old cozening quean! Have I not forbid her my house? She comes of errands, does she? We are simple men; we do not know what's brought to pass under the profession of fortune-telling. She works by charms, by spells, by the figure; and such daubery as this is beyond our element; we know nothing. Come down, you witch, you hag, you; come down, I say!

Mrs. Ford. Nay, good, sweet husband! Good gentlemen, let him not strike the old woman.

Re-enter Falstaff disguised like an old woman, and Mistress Page with him.

Mrs. Page. Come, Mother Prat; come, give me your hand.

Ford. I'll prat her. Out of my door, you witch, you hag, you baggage, you polecat, you ronyon! out, out! I'll conjure you, I'll fortune-tell you!

Ford beats him, and he runs away.

Mrs. Page. Are you not asham'd? I think you have kill'd the poor woman.

Mrs. Ford. Nay, he will do it. 'Tis a goodly credit for you.

Ford. Hang her, witch!

Evans. By yea and no, I think the 'oman is a witch indeed. I like not when a 'oman has a great peard. I spy a great peard under his muffler.

Ford. Will you follow, gentlemen? I beseech you, follow; see but the issue of my jealousy. If I cry out thus upon no trail, never trust me when I open again.

Page. Let's obey his humour a little further. Come, gentlemen.

Exeunt [Ford, Page, Shal., Caius, and Evans].

Mrs. Page. Trust me, he beat him most pitifully.

Mrs. Ford. Nay, by the mass, that he did not; he beat him most unpitifully, methought.

Mrs. Page. I'll have the cudgel hallow'd and hung o'er the altar. It hath done meritorious service.

Mrs. Ford. What think you? May we, with the warrant of womanhood and the witness of a good conscience, pursue him with any further revenge?

Mrs. Page. The spirit of wantonness is, sure, scar'd out of him. If the devil have him not in fee-simple, with fine and recovery, he will never, I think, in the way of waste, attempt us again.

Mrs. Ford. Shall we tell our husbands how we have serv'd him?

Mrs. Page. Yes, by all means; if it be but to scrape the figures out of your husband's brains. If they can find in their hearts the poor unvirtuous fat knight shall be any further afflicted, we two will still be the ministers.

Mrs. Ford. I'll warrant they'll have him publicly sham'd; and methinks there would be no period to the jest, should he not be publicly sham'd.

Mrs. Page. Come, to the forge with it then; shape it. I would not have things cool.

Exeunt.

Scene III

[A room in the Garter Inn.]

Enter Host and Bardolph.

Bard. Sir, the German desires to have three of your horses. The Duke himself will be tomorrow at court, and they are going to meet him.

Host. What duke should that be comes so secretly? I hear not of him in the court. Let me speak with the gentlemen. They speak English?

Bard. Ay, sir; I'll call them to you.

Host. They shall have my horses; but I'll make them pay, I'll sauce them. They have had my houses a week at command. I have turn'd away my other guests. They must come off; I'll sauce them. Come. *Exeunt.*

Scene IV

[A room in Ford's house.]

Enter Page, Ford, Mistress Page, Mistress Ford, and Sir Hugh Evans.

Evans. 'Tis one of the best discretions of a 'oman as ever I did look upon.

Page. And did he send you both these letters at an instant?

Mrs. Page. Within a quarter of an hour.

Ford. Pardon me, wife. Henceforth do what thou wilt.
I rather will suspect the sun with cold
Than thee with wantonness. Now doth thy honour stand,
In him that was of late an heretic,
As firm as faith.

Page. 'Tis well, 'tis well; no more.
Be not as extreme in submission
As in offence.
But let our plot go forward. Let our wives
Yet once again, to make us public sport,
Appoint a meeting with this old fat fellow,
Where we may take him and disgrace him for it.

Ford. There is no better way than that they spoke of.

Page. How? To send him word they'll meet him in the park at midnight? Fie, fie! he'll never come.

Evans. You say he has been thrown in the rivers and has been grievously peaten as an old 'oman. Methinks there should be terrors in him that he should not come; methinks his flesh is punish'd; he shall have no desires.

Page. So think I too.

Mrs. Ford. Devise but how you'll use him when he comes,
And let us two devise to bring him thither.

Mrs. Page. There is an old tale goes that Herne the hunter,
Sometime a keeper here in Windsor forest,
Doth all the winter-time, at still midnight,
Walk round about an oak, with great ragg'd horns;
And there he blasts the tree, and takes the cattle,
And makes milch-kine yield blood, and shakes a chain
In a most hideous and dreadful manner.
You have heard of such a spirit, and well you know
The superstitious idle-headed eld
Receiv'd and did deliver to our age
This tale of Herne the hunter for a truth.
Page. Why, yet there want not many that do fear
In deep of night to walk by this Herne's oak.
But what of this?
Mrs. Ford. Marry, this is our device;
That Falstaff at that oak shall meet with us
[Disguis'd like Herne, with huge horns on his head].
Page. Well, let it not be doubted but he'll come;
And in this shape when you have brought him thither,
What shall be done with him? What is your plot?
Mrs. Page. That likewise have we thought upon, and thus:

Nan Page my daughter and my little son
And three or four more of their growth we'll dress
Like urchins, ouphes, and fairies, green and white,
With rounds of waxen tapers on their heads,
And rattles in their hands. Upon a sudden,
As Falstaff, she, and I are newly met,
Let them from forth a sawpit rush at once
With some diffused song. Upon their sight,
We two in great amazedness will fly.
Then let them all encircle him about
And, fairy-like, to pinch the unclean knight,
And ask him why, that hour of fairy revel,
In their so sacred paths he dares to tread
In shape profane.

[*Mrs.*] *Ford.* And till he tell the truth,
Let the supposed fairies pinch him sound
And burn him with their tapers.

Mrs. Page. The truth being known,
We'll all present ourselves, dis-horn the spirit,
And mock him home to Windsor.

Ford. The children must
Be practis'd well to this, or they'll ne'er do't.

Evans. I will teach the children their behaviours; and I will be like a jack-an-apes also, to burn the knight with my taber.

Ford. That will be excellent. I'll go and buy them vizards,

Mrs. Page. My Nan shall be the queen of all the fairies,
Finely attired in a robe of white.
Page. That silk will I go buy. [*Aside.*] And in that time
Shall Master Slender steal my Nan away
And marry her at Eton. Go send to Falstaff straight.
Ford. Nay, I'll to him again in name of Brook.
He'll tell me all his purpose. Sure, he'll come.
Mrs. Page. Fear not you that. Go get us properties
And tricking for our fairies.
Evans. Let us about it. It is admirable pleasures and fery honest knaveries.
[*Exeunt Page, Ford, and Evans.*]
Mrs. Page. Go, Mistress Ford,
Send Quickly to Sir John, to know his mind.
[*Exit Mrs. Ford.*]
I'll to the doctor; he hath my good will,
And none but he, to marry with Nan Page.
That Slender, though well landed, is an idiot;
And he my husband best of all affects.
The doctor is well money'd, and his friends
Potent at court. He, none but he, shall have her,
Though twenty thousand worthier come to crave her.
[*Exit.*]

Scene V

[A room in the Garter Inn.]

Enter Host and Simple.

Host. What wouldst thou have, boor? What, thick-skin? Speak, breathe, discuss; brief, short, quick, snap.

Sim. Marry, sir, I come to speak with Sir John Falstaff from Master Slender.

Host. There's his chamber, his house, his castle, his standing-bed and truckle-bed; 'tis painted about with the story of the Prodigal, fresh and new. Go knock and call; he'll speak like an Anthropophaginian unto thee. Knock, I say.

Sim. There's an old woman, a fat woman, gone up into his chamber. I'll be so bold as stay, sir, till she come down. I come to speak with her, indeed.

Host. Ha! a fat woman? The knight may be robb'd. I'll call. Bully knight! bully Sir John! speak from thy lungs military. Art thou there? It is thine host, thine Ephesian, calls.

Fal. [*Above.*] How now, mine host?

Host. Here's a Bohemian-Tartar tarries the coming down of thy fat woman. Let her descend, bully, let her descend; my chambers are honourable. Fie! privacy? fie!

Enter Falstaff.

Fal. There was, mine host, an old fat woman even now with me; but she's gone.

Sim. Pray you, sir, was't not the wise woman of Brainford?

Fal. Ay, marry, was it, mussel-shell. What would you with her?

Sim. My master, sir, my Master Slender, sent to her, seeing her go thorough the streets, to know, sir, whether one Nym, sir, that beguil'd him of a chain, had the chain or no.

Fal. I spake with the old woman about it.

Sim. And what says she, I pray, sir?

Fal. Marry, she says that the very same man that beguil'd Master Slender of his chain cozen'd him of it.

Sim. I would I could have spoken with the woman herself. I had other things to have spoken with her too from him.

Fal. What are they? Let us know.

Host. Ay, come; quick.

Sim. I may not conceal them, sir.

Host. Conceal them, or thou diest.

Sim. Why, sir, they were nothing but about Mistress Anne Page; to know if it were my master's fortune to have her or no.

Fal. 'Tis, 'tis his fortune.

Sim. What, sir?

Fal. To have her, or no. Go; say the woman told me so.

Sim. May I be bold to say so, sir?

Fal. Ay, sir; like who more bold?

Sim. I thank your worship. I shall make my master glad with these tidings. [*Exit.*]

Host. Thou art clerkly, thou art clerkly, Sir John. Was there a wise woman with thee?

Fal. Ay, that there was, mine host; one that hath taught me more wit than ever I learn'd before in my life; and I paid nothing for it neither, but was paid for my learning.

Enter Bardolph.

Bard. Out, alas, sir! cozenage, mere cozenage.

Host. Where be my horses? Speak well of them, varletto.

Bard. Run away with the cozeners; for so soon as I came beyond Eton, they threw me off from behind one of them, in a slough of mire; and set spurs and away, like three German devils, three Doctor Faustuses.

Host. They are gone but to meet the Duke, villain; do not say they be fled. Germans are honest men.

Enter Sir Hugh Evans.

Evans. Where is mine host?

Host. What is the matter, sir?

Evans. Have a care of your entertainments. There is a friend of mine come to town, tells me there is three cozen-germans that has cozen'd all the hosts of Readins, of Maidenhead, of Colebrook, of horses and money. I tell you for good will, look you. You are wise and full of gibes and vlouting-stocks, and 'tis not convenient you should be cozened. Fare you well. [*Exit.*]

Enter Doctor Caius.

Caius. Vere is mine host de Jarteer.

Host. Here, Master Doctor, in perplexity and doubtful dilemma.

Caius. I cannot tell vat is dat; but it is tell-a me dat you make grand preparation for a duke de Jamany. By my trot, dere is no duke that de court is know to come. I tell you for good will; adieu. [*Exit.*]

Host. Hue and cry, villain, go! Assist me, knight. I am undone! Fly, run, hue and cry, villain! I am undone!

Exeunt Host [*and Bard.*].

Fal. I would all the world might be cozen'd; for I have been cozen'd and beaten too. If it should come to the ear of the court, how I have been transformed and how my trans-

formation hath been wash'd and cudgell'd, they would melt me out of my fat drop by drop, and liquor fishermen's boots with me. I warrant they would whip me with their fine wits till I were as crestfallen as a dri'd pear. I never prosper'd since I forswore myself at primero. Well, if my wind were but long enough [to say my prayers,] I would repent.

Enter Mistress Quickly.

Now, whence come you?

Quick. From the two parties, forsooth.

Fal. The devil take one party and his dam the other! and so they shall be both bestowed. I have suffer'd more for their sakes, more than the villanous inconstancy of man's disposition is able to bear.

Quick. And have not they suffer'd? Yes, I warrant; speciously one of them. Mistress Ford, good heart, is beaten black and blue, that you cannot see a white spot about her.

Fal. What tellest thou me of black and blue? I was beaten myself into all the colours of the rainbow; and I was like to be apprehended for the witch of Brainford. But that my admirable dexterity of wit, my counterfeiting the action of an old woman, deliver'd

me, the knave constable had set me i' the stocks, i' the common stocks, for a witch.

Quick. Sir, let me speak with you in your chamber. You shall hear how things go, and, I warrant, to your content. Here is a letter will say somewhat. Good hearts, what ado here is to bring you together! Sure, one of you does not serve heaven well, that you are so cross'd.

Fal. Come up into my chamber. *Exeunt.*

SCENE VI

[*Another room in the Garter Inn.*]

Enter Fenton and Host.

Host. Master Fenton, talk not to me; my mind is heavy. I will give over all.

Fent. Yet hear me speak. Assist me in my purpose,
And, as I am a gentleman, I'll give thee
A hundred pound in gold more than your loss.

Host. I will hear you, Master Fenton; and I will at the least keep your counsel.

Fent. From time to time I have acquainted you
With the dear love I bear to fair Anne Page;
Who mutually hath answer'd my affection,
So far forth as herself might be her chooser,
Even to my wish. I have a letter from her
Of such contents as you will wonder at;

The mirth whereof so larded with my matter,
That neither singly can be manifested,
Without the show of both. Fat Falstaff
Hath a great scene. The image of the jest
I'll show you here at large. Hark, good mine host.
To-night at Herne's oak, just 'twixt twelve and one,
Must my sweet Nan present the Fairy Queen;
The purpose why, is here; in which disguise,
While other jests are something rank on foot,
Her father hath commanded her to slip
Away with Slender and with him at Eton
Immediately to marry. She hath consented.
Now, sir,
Her mother, ever strong against that match
And firm for Doctor Caius, hath appointed
That he shall likewise shuffle her away
While other sports are tasking of their minds,
And at the deanery, where a priest attends,
Straight marry her. To this her mother's plot
She seemingly obedient likewise hath
Made promise to the doctor. Now, thus it rests:
Her father means she shall be all in white,
And in that habit, when Slender sees his time
To take her by the hand and bid her go,
She shall go with him. Her mother hath intended,

The better to denote her to the doctor,
For they must all be mask'd and vizarded,
That quaint in green she shall be loose enrob'd,
With ribands pendent, flaring 'bout her head;
And when the doctor spies his vantage ripe,
To pinch her by the hand, and, on that token,
The maid hath given consent to go with him.

Host. Which means she to deceive, father or mother?

Fent. Both, my good host, to go along with me.
And here it rests, that you'll procure the vicar
To stay for me at church 'twixt twelve and one,
And, in the lawful name of marrying,
To give our hearts united ceremony.

Host. Well, husband your device; I'll to the vicar.
Bring you the maid, you shall not lack a priest.

Fent. So shall I evermore be bound to thee;
Besides, I'll make a present recompense.

Exeunt.

ACT FIFTH

SCENE I

[*A room in the Garter Inn.*]

Enter Falstaff and Mistress Quickly.

Fal. Prithee, no more prattling; go. I'll hold. This is the third time; I hope good luck lies in odd numbers. Away! go. They say there is divinity in odd numbers, either in nativity, chance, or death. Away!

Quick. I'll provide you a chain; and I'll do what I can to get you a pair of horns.

Fal. Away, I say; time wears. Hold up your head, and mince. [*Exit Mrs. Quickly.*]

[*Enter Ford.*]

How now, Master Brook! Master Brook, the matter will be known to-night, or never. Be you in the park about midnight, at Herne's oak, and you shall see wonders.

Ford. Went you not to her yesterday, sir, as you told me you had appointed?

Fal. I went to her, Master Brook, as you see, like a poor old man; but I came from her, Master Brook, like a poor old woman. That same knave Ford, her husband, hath the

finest mad devil of jealousy in him, Master Brook, that ever govern'd frenzy. I will tell you. He beat me grievously, in the shape of a woman; for in the shape of man, Master Brook, I fear not Goliath with a weaver's beam; because I know also life is a shuttle. I am in haste; go along with me. I'll tell you all, Master Brook. Since I pluck'd geese, play'd truant and whipp'd top, I knew not what 'twas to be beaten till lately. Follow me. I'll tell you strange things of this knave Ford, on whom to-night I will be revenged, and I will deliver his wife into your hand. Follow. Strange things in hand, Master Brook! Follow. *Exeunt.*

Scene II

[*Windsor Park.*]

Enter Page, Shallow, and Slender.

Page. Come, come; we'll couch i' the castle-ditch till we see the light of our fairies. Remember, son Slender, my daughter.

Slen. Ay, forsooth; I have spoke with her and we have a nay-word how to know one another. I come to her in white, and cry "mum"; she cries "budget"; and by that we know one another.

Shal. That's good too; but what needs either your "mum" or her "budget"? The white will decipher her well enough. It hath struck ten o'clock.

Page. The night is dark; light and spirits will become it well. Heaven prosper our sport! No man means evil but the devil, and we shall know him by his horns. Let's away; follow me. *Exeunt.*

SCENE III

[*A street leading to the Park.*]

Enter Mistress Page, Mistress Ford, and Doctor Caius.

Mrs. Page. Master Doctor, my daughter is in green. When you see your time, take her by the hand, away with her to the deanery, and dispatch it quickly. Go before into the park; we two must go together.

Caius. I know vat I have to do. Adieu.

Mrs. Page. Fare you well, sir. [*Exit Caius.*] My husband will not rejoice so much at the abuse of Falstaff as he will chafe at the doctor's marrying my daughter. But 'tis no matter; better a little chiding than a great deal of heart-break.

Mrs. Ford. Where is Nan now and her troop of fairies, and the Welsh devil Hugh?

Mrs. Page. They are all couch'd in a pit hard

by Herne's oak, with obscur'd lights; which, at the very instant of Falstaff's and our meeting, they will at once display to the night.

Mrs. Ford. That cannot choose but amaze him.

Mrs. Page. If he be not amaz'd, he will be mock'd; if he be amaz'd, he will every way be mock'd.

Mrs. Ford. We'll betray him finely.

Mrs. Page. Against such lewdsters and their lechery Those that betray them do no treachery.

Mrs. Ford. The hour draws on. To the oak, to the oak! *Exeunt.*

SCENE IV

[*Windsor Park.*]

Enter Sir Hugh Evans [*disguised*], *and* [*others as*] *Fairies.*

Evans. Trib, trib, fairies; come; and remember your parts. Be pold, I pray you. Follow me into the pit, and when I give the watch-'ords, do as I pid you. Come, come; trib, trib. *Exeunt.*

SCENE V

[*Another part of the Park.*]

Enter Falstaff with a buck's head upon him.

Fal. The Windsor bell hath struck twelve; the minute draws on. Now, the hot-blooded gods assist me! Remember, Jove, thou wast a bull

for thy Europa; love set on thy horns. O powerful love! that, in some respects, makes a beast a man, in some other, a man a beast. You were also, Jupiter, a swan for the love of Leda. O omnipotent Love! how near the god drew to the complexion of a goose! A fault done first in the form of a beast. O Jove, a beastly fault! And then another fault in the semblance of a fowl; think on't, Jove; a foul fault! When gods have hot backs, what shall poor men do? For me, I am here a Windsor stag; and the fattest, I think, i' the forest. Send me a cool rut-time, Jove, or who can blame me to piss my tallow? Who comes here? My doe?

Enter Mistress Ford and Mistress Page.

Mrs. Ford. Sir John! art thou there, my deer? my male deer?

Fal. My doe with the black scut! Let the sky rain potatoes; let it thunder to the tune of "Green Sleeves," hail kissing-comfits and snow eringoes; let there come a tempest of provocation, I will shelter me here.

Mrs. Ford. Mistress Page is come with me, sweetheart.

Fal. Divide me like a brib'd buck, each a haunch. I will keep my sides to myself, my shoulders for the fellow of this walk, and my horns I be-

queath your husbands. Am I a woodman, ha? Speak I like Herne the hunter? Why, now is Cupid a child of conscience; he makes restitution. As I am a true spirit, welcome!

[*Noise within.*]

Mrs. Page. Alas, what noise?

Mrs. Ford. Heaven forgive our sins!

Fal. What should this be?

Mrs. Ford.
Mrs. Page. } Away, away! [*They run off.*]

Fal. I think the devil will not have me damn'd, lest the oil that's in me should set hell on fire; he would never else cross me thus.

Enter Sir Hugh Evans, like a Satyr, and boys dressed like Fairies [*Pistol, as Hobgoblin*]; *Mistress Quickly, like the Queen of Fairies; they sing a song about him and afterward speak.*

Quick. Fairies, black, grey, green, and white,
You moonshine revellers, and shades of night,
You orphan heirs of fixed destiny,
Attend your office and your quality.
Crier Hobgoblin, make the fairy oyes.

Pist. Elves, list your names. Silence, you airy toys!
Cricket, to Windsor chimneys shalt thou leap,
Where fires thou find'st unrak'd and hearths unswept,

There pinch the maids as blue as bilberry;
Our radiant queen hates sluts and sluttery.
Fal. They are fairies; he that speaks to them shall die.
I'll wink and couch; no man their works must eye. [*Lies down upon his face.*]
Evans. Where's Bead? Go you, and where you find a maid
That, ere she sleep, has thrice her prayers said,
Rein up the organs of her fantasy;
Sleep she as sound as careless infancy.
But those as sleep and think not on their sins,
Pinch them, arms, legs, backs, shoulders, sides, and shins.
Quick. About, about;
Search Windsor Castle, elves, within and out.
Strew good luck, ouphes, on every sacred room,
That it may stand till the perpetual doom,
In state as wholesome as in state 'tis fit,
Worthy the owner, and the owner it.
The several chairs of order look you scour
With juice of balm and every precious flower.
Each fair instalment, coat, and several crest,
With loyal blazon, evermore be blest!
And nightly, meadow-fairies, look you sing,
Like to the Garter's compass, in a ring.
The expressure that it bears, green let it be,
More fertile-fresh than all the field to see;

And "*Honi soit qui mal y pense*" write
In emerald tufts, flowers purple, blue, and white;
Like sapphire, pearl, and rich embroidery,
Buckled below fair knighthood's bending knee.
Fairies use flowers for their charactery.
Away; disperse! but till 'tis one o'clock,
Our dance of custom round about the oak
Of Herne the hunter, let us not forget.

Evans. Pray you, lock hand in hand; yourselves in order set;
And twenty glow-worms shall our lanterns be,
To guide our measure round about the tree.
But, stay; I smell a man of middle-earth.

Fal. Heavens defend me from that Welsh fairy, lest he transform me to a piece of cheese!

Pist. Vile worm, thou wast o'erlook'd even in thy birth.

Quick. With trial-fire touch me his finger-end.
If he be chaste, the flame will back descend
And turn him to no pain; but if he start,
It is the flesh of a corrupted heart.

Pist. A trial, come.

Evans. Come, will this wood take fire?

They put the tapers to his fingers, and he starts.

Fal. Oh, Oh, Oh!

Quick. Corrupt, corrupt, and tainted in desire!
About him, fairies; sing a scornful rhyme;
And, as you trip, still pinch him to your time.

THE SONG

Fie on sinful fantasy!
Fie on lust and luxury!
Lust is but a bloody fire,
Kindled with unchaste desire,
Fed in heart, whose flames aspire
As thoughts do blow them, higher and higher.
Pinch him, fairies, mutually!
Pinch him for his villainy!
Pinch him, and burn him, and turn him about,
Till candles and starlight and moonshine be out.

Here they pinch Falstaff and sing about him. Doctor Caius comes one way, and steals away a boy in green; Slender another way, and takes a boy in white; and Fenton comes, and steals Anne Page. A noise of hunting is made within. All the Fairies run away. Falstaff pulls off his buck's head, and rises up.

Enter Page, Ford, Mistress Page, Mistress Ford, and Shallow.

Page. Nay, do not fly; I think we have watch'd you now.
Will none but Herne the hunter serve your turn?

Mrs. Page. I pray you, come, hold up the jest no higher.

Now, good Sir John, how like you Windsor wives?
See you these, husband? Do not these fairy oaks
Become the forest better than the town?

Ford. Now, sir, who's a cuckold now? Master Brook, Falstaff's a knave, a cuckoldly knave; here are his horns, Master Brook; and, Master Brook, he hath enjoyed nothing of Ford's but his buck-basket, his cudgel, and twenty pounds of money, which must be paid to Master Brook. His horses are arrested for it, Master Brook.

Mrs. Ford. Sir John, we have had ill luck; we could never meet. I will never take you for my love again; but I will always count you my deer.

Fal. I do begin to perceive that I am made an ass.

Ford. Ay, and an ox too; both the proofs are extant.

Fal. And these are not fairies? I was three or four times in the thought they were not fairies; and yet the guiltiness of my mind, the sudden surprise of my powers, drove the grossness of the foppery into a receiv'd belief, in despite of the teeth of all rhyme and reason, that they were fairies. See now how wit may be made a Jack-a-Lent, when 'tis upon ill employment!

Evans. Sir John Falstaff, serve Got, and leave your desires, and fairies will not pinse you.

Ford. Well said, fairy Hugh.

Evans. And leave your jealousies too, I pray you.

Ford. I will never mistrust my wife again, till thou art able to woo her in good English.

Fal. Have I laid my brain in the sun and dri'd it, that it wants matter to prevent so gross o'er-reaching as this? Am I ridden with a Welsh goat too? Shall I have a coxcomb of frieze? 'Tis time I were chok'd with a piece of toasted cheese.

Evans. Seese is not good to give putter; your belly is all putter.

Fal. "Seese" and "putter"! Have I liv'd to stand at the taunt of one that makes fritters of English? This is enough to be the decay of lust and late-walking through the realm.

Mrs. Page. Why, Sir John, do you think, though we would have thrust virtue out of our hearts by the head and shoulders, and have given ourselves without scruple to hell, that ever the devil could have made you our delight?

Ford. What, a hodge-pudding? A bag of flax?

Mrs. Page. A puff'd man?

Page. Old, cold, wither'd, and of intolerable entrails?

Ford. And one that is as slanderous as Satan?

Page. And as poor as Job?

Ford. And as wicked as his wife?

Evans. And given to fornications, and to taverns, and sack, and wine, and metheglins, and to drinkings, and swearings and starings, pribbles and prabbles?

Fal. Well, I am your theme; you have the start of me. I am dejected; I am not able to answer the Welsh flannel. Ignorance itself is a plummet o'er me. Use me as you will.

Ford. Marry, sir, we'll bring you to Windsor, to one Master Brook, that you have cozen'd of money, to whom you should have been a pander. Over and above that you have suffer'd, I think to repay that money will be a biting affliction.

Page. Yet be cheerful, knight. Thou shalt eat a posset to-night at my house; where I will desire thee to laugh at my wife, that now laughs at thee. Tell her Master Slender hath married her daughter.

Mrs. Page. [*Aside.*] Doctors doubt that. If Anne Page be my daughter, she is, by this, Doctor Caius' wife.

Enter Slender.

Slen. Whoa, ho! ho, Father Page!

Page. Son, how now! how now, son! have you dispatch'd?

Slen. Dispatch'd! I'll make the best in Gloucestershire know on't. Would I were hang'd, la, else!

Page. Of what, son?

Slen. I came yonder at Eton to marry Mistress Anne Page, and she's a great lubberly boy. If it had not been i' the church, I would have swing'd him, or he should have swing'd me. If I did not think it had been Anne Page, would I might never stir! — and 'tis a postmaster's boy.

Page. Upon my life, then, you took the wrong.

Slen. What need you tell me that? I think so, when I took a boy for a girl. If I had been married to him, for all he was in woman's apparel, I would not have had him.

Page. Why, this is your own folly. Did not I tell you how you should know my daughter by her garments?

Slen. I went to her in white, and cried "mum," and she cri'd "budget," as Anne and I had appointed; and yet it was not Anne, but a postmaster's boy.

Mrs. Page. Good George, be not angry. I knew of your purpose; turn'd my daughter into green; and, indeed, she is now with the Doctor at the deanery, and there married.

Enter Caius.

Caius. Vere is Mistress Page? By gar, I am cozened. I ha' married oon garsoon, a boy; oon pesant, by gar, a boy; it is not Anne Page. By gar, I am cozened.

Mrs. Page. Why, did you take her in green?

Caius. Ay, by gar, and 'tis a boy. By gar, I'll raise all Windsor. *Exit.*

Ford. This is strange. Who hath got the right Anne?

Page. My heart misgives me. Here comes Master Fenton.

Enter Fenton and Anne Page.

How now, Master Fenton!

Anne. Pardon, good father! good my mother, pardon!

Page. Now, mistress, how chance you went not with Master Slender?

Mrs. Page. Why went you not with Master Doctor, maid?

Fent. You do amaze her. Hear the truth of it.
You would have married her most shamefully,
Where there was no proportion held in love.
The truth is, she and I, long since contracted,
Are now so sure that nothing can dissolve us.
The offence is holy that she hath committed;
And this deceit loses the name of craft,
Of disobedience, or unduteous title,

Since therein she doth evitate and shun
A thousand irreligious cursed hours,
Which forced marriage would have brought upon her.

Ford. Stand not amaz'd; here is no remedy.
In love the heavens themselves do guide the state;
Money buys lands, and wives are sold by fate.

Fal. I am glad, though you have ta'en a special stand to strike at me, that your arrow hath glanc'd.

Page. Well, what remedy? Fenton, heaven give thee joy!
What cannot be eschew'd must be embrac'd.

Fal. When night-dogs run, all sorts of deer are chas'd.

Mrs. Page. Well, I will muse no further. Master Fenton,
Heaven give you many, many merry days!
Good husband, let us every one go home,
And laugh this sport o'er by a country fire;
Sir John and all.

Ford. Let it be so. Sir John,
To Master Brook you yet shall hold your word,
For he to-night shall lie with Mistress Ford.

Exeunt.

Notes

The list of *Dramatis Personæ* first appears in the edition of Rowe, 1709. The division into acts and scenes is that of the First Folio. The place-directions at the beginning of each scene, bracketed in the present text, were added by later editors. A copy of the Quarto of 1630, now in the possession of the Boston Public Library, contains manuscript stage directions believed to be of contemporary date.

I. i. 1. **Sir Hugh.** Sir, a translation of *dominus*, the usual title of Bachelors of Arts, was commonly given to clergymen at this time.

I. i. 2. **Star-chamber.** A court of justices sitting without a jury, and possessing great power. The name was probably given on account of the stars decorating the ceiling of the original chamber.

I. i. 6. **Coram.** A corruption of *quorum*, "the first word of the clause in the commission which named the justices" (Hart); perhaps, too, suggested by Justice Shallow's legal attestation to "bills, warrants, quittances, or obligations," *Coram me Roberto Shallow armigero, i.e.* "before me," etc.

I. i. 7. **Custalorum.** Shallow's blunder for Custos Rotulorum, Keeper of the Rolls.

I. i. 8. **Rato-lorum.** A comic continuation of the blunder noted above.

I. i. 10. **Armigero,** ablative case, because of use in

phrases as noted above, of *Armiger*, a gentleman bearing a coat of arms; or Italian for *valiant*.

I. i. 16–23. This is the famous passage ridiculing Sir Thomas Lucy, from whose park tradition says that the youthful Shakespeare stole deer. Ferne's *Blazon of Gentry*, 1586, says "Geffray, Lord Lucy, did bear gules three luces hariant, argent," that is, on a red escutcheon, three white pikes, placed upright. In the *Booke of St. Albans*, edition of 1595, the *Booke of Armorie*, page 91, has ". . . carrieth three pikes or Lucies"; and in the engraved escutcheon they are erect on their tails, as if leaping, *saltant* in the language of heraldry. In the notes of Knight's edition, the reading *saltant* is proposed in place of the folio reading, salt-fish.

I. i. 24–26. To **quarter** is to add to the coat of arms another arranged in one quarter of the escutcheon. The pun on marrying and marring is common; for example, "a young man married is a man that's marred," *All's Well that Ends Well*, II. iii. 315.

I. i. 49. **speak small.** Speak with a girlish voice. Cf. "Play it in a mask and you may speak as small as you will," *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, I. ii. 52; and "Thy small pipe Is as the maiden's organ, shrill and sound," *Twelfth Night*, I. iv. 32.

I. i. 88. **by yea and no** is a petty oath used nine times in Shakespeare's plays.

I. i. 91. **Cotsall** is still the popular pronunciation of Cotswold, a range of hills, extending from the border of Warwickshire to the southwest of Gloucestershire. Joseph Hunter, in his *New Studies of the Life, Studies, and Writings of Shakespeare*, 1845, shows that the Cotswold

games, including coursing, or chasing rabbits with greyhounds, were instituted as early as 1596.

I. i. 128. **cony-catching.** The cony is literally the rabbit, an animal supposed to have little brains. In the thieves' slang of the time, a cony-catcher was a cheat or swindler. In 1592 appeared a book, attributed to the dramatist Robert Greene, entitled *The Groundworke of Conny-catching.* In the same thieves' slang, *Nym* means to steal.

I. i. 130. **Banbury** was noted for the thinness of its cheese, referred to by many sixteenth century authors.

I. i. 135. **that's my humour.** A man's disposition was supposed to be determined by the proportions of the humours in the body, and their tempering, or mixing. The phrase is equivalent to "That's my temper, that's how I feel about it." The word was constantly overworked after the production of Ben Jonson's famous and popular comedy, *Every Man in his Humour,* in 1598. In the sense of temperamental disposition or mood, especially a peculiar mood provocative of satire or ridicule, *humour* occurs as early as 1557 in Tottel's *Miscellany,* is used in Lyly's *Euphues,* North's *Plutarch,* and Sidney's *Apology for Poetry.* Pistol's humor seems to include a predilection for the constant quoting or misquoting of popular plays or other blank verse; his "Mephostophilus," line 132, may be taken from Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus.*"

I. i. 152. The **affectation** is redundancy in speech.

I. i. 158–161. A **groat** was fourpence; milled sixpences were coins with a raised border. Slender's statement is one of his amusing blunders. An **Edward shovel-board** was an old shilling, coined in the reign of Edward VI,

without the milled edges and consequently smooth enough to be used in the game of shovel-board; these coins were sufficiently rare to bring a premium.

I. i. 165. **latten bilbo.** Bilbao, in Spain, was noted for its fine swords, called bilbos; a latten bilbo was one made of a soft metal, rolled very thin, like sheet tin. The fitness of the application of the phrase to Slender may consist in his thinness or in his physical weakness.

I. i. 170–171. This passage has never been satisfactorily explained; but it probably means, "I will join with you, that is, fight you, if you try to play the informant (nut-hook = catchpoll) against me."

I. i. 177. **Scarlet and John** were two of Robin Hood's men. The humour of Falstaff's name for Bardolph is seen in his constant reference in *Henry IV* to Bardolph's red face.

I. i. 184. **conclusions . . . careers.** "To passe a careire is but to runne with strength and ability such a convenient course as is meete for his ability." (Markham's *English Horseman*, ii. 19.) The whole phrase seems to mean, conclusions ran their natural course.

I. i. 206. **Book of Songs and Sonnets.** It was customary for Elizabethan courtiers to make manuscript collections of poems that pleased their fancy. Slender may refer to his manuscript book, or to *Songs and Sonnets*, published by Tottel in 1557.

I. i. 307. **Sackerson.** Near the theatres on the Bankside was the Paris Garden, where the amusement of bear-baiting was carried on; one of the bears was named Sackerson.

I. i. 316. **by cock and pie.** This is one of the very numerous mild oaths of the Elizabethan period.

I. iii. 15. **froth and lime.** The Host wants to see Bardolph's proficiency in drawing beer with much froth and in adulterating the sack with lime.

I. iii. 45, 46. Falstaff makes the same pun in *2 Henry IV*, I. ii. 160.

I. iii. 56. **The anchor is deep.** The scheme is a deep one and one that will hold fast. Kinnear suggests angle for anchor, in the meaning of plot or design, with a pun upon *angels*, gold coins, line 60.

I. iii. 70. Bond's edition of Lyly's *Euphues*, 1579, has in Vol. I, p. 193, " The sun shineth uppon the dungehill, and is not corrupted." There was a popular proverbial form, " The sun is never the worse for shining on a dunghill."

I. iii. 79. In 1596, Sir Walter Raleigh published *The Discoverie of the Large, Rich, and Bewtiful Empyre of Guiana*. The Indies and America were supposed to be sources of great wealth.

I. iii. 83. **Sir Pandarus of Troy.** Pandarus in the numerous early versions of the Troilus and Cressida story, as in Shakespeare's play, acts the part of go-between, or " pander " to the lovers.

I. iii. 94, 95. Malone explains **gourds** as hollow dice and **fullams** as loaded dice; Pistol evidently means that he will gain a livelihood by cheating rich and poor at dice throwing.

I. iv. 8. **soon at night.** The phrase means as soon as evening comes. *Soon* is similarly used in the *Comedy of Errors*, I. ii. 26, and in *The Merchant of Venice*, II. iii. 5; also in this play, II. iii. 299.

I. iv. 53, 54. Faith, it is very hot. I am going to court, — the great affair.

I. iv. 56. Yes; put it in my pocket; **hurry.**

I. iv. 65. What have I forgotten?

I. iv. 79. Mistress Quickly evidently confuses the temperaments and, instead of *phlegmatic*, sluggish, apathetic, means *choleric*, quick to anger.

I. iv. 123. **Jack priest.** Jack was commonly used in a disparaging sense, as Jack Rugby, line 60; also in many combinations, as jackass, jack of all trades, jackanapes.

I. iv. 125. **measure our weapon.** Act as umpire in a duel.

I. iv. 134. Mistress Quickly is speaking loudly as Caius goes out; then, when the door is shut, finishes the sentence to her liking.

I. iv. 159. **thereby hangs a tale.** Shakespeare seldom repeats exact phrases, but this occurs in *As You Like It*, IV. i. 60.

I. iv. 160. **such another.** *Another* seems only to add exclamatory force to *such*, as "it is such a Nan!" The phrase is used with identical force in *Troilus and Cressida*, I. ii. 282, 297.

II. i. 20. **Herod of Jewry.** Herod, King of the Jews, was represented in the old miracle plays as the incarnation of evil.

II. i. 24. **Flemish drunkard.** The Flemish, the Danes, and the Germans were notorious for drunkenness.

II. i. 52–54. **These knights will hack.** This passage has been variously interpreted; *hack* being defined as become hackneyed, common, or cheap; kick; deny, or repudiate; do mischief. Allusion has been found here to the cheapening of knighthood by Essex in 1596 or by James I. In any case the remainder of the sentence means: so thou shouldst not change the degree of thy rank.

II. i. 54. **burn daylight.** Waste time; cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, I. iv. 43.

II. i. 64. "**Green Sleeves.**" This was a popular light song, mentioned again in V. v. 22.

II. i. 121. **liver.** The liver rather than the heart was supposed to be the seat of love.

II. i. 122. **Sir Actæon.** In classical mythology, Actæon was the huntsman who surprised Diana bathing and was changed by her into a stag and was eaten by his own dogs. As a stag, he had horns, the mediæval symbol of a cuckold. Partly from similarity of sound, *cuckoo* carried the same allusion; see *cuckoo-birds*, line 127. **Ringwood** was the name of a dog.

II. i. 201. **Cavaleiro-justice.** The Spanish *cavellero* meant knight, or horseman; the Italian *cavaliere* meant also a fine gentleman, a gallant; the Italian *cavallero*, sergeant, officer, Sir. The Host is calling Justice Shallow Sir Justice.

II. ii. 5. **lay my countenance to pawn.** Falstaff means that he has countenanced, that is, gone surety for, Pistol in his borrowings.

II. ii. 19. **Pickt-hatch.** Jonson's twelfth *Epigram* refers to the notorious resorts in London as "Pickt-hatch, Mersh-Lambeth, and White-fryers."

II. ii. 79. **pensioners.** The bodyguards of Henry VIII and of Queen Elizabeth were chosen from the gentlemen at court and given the name pensioners. Cf. *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, II. i. 10.

II. ii. 216–217. Cf. "Follow a shadow, it still flies you, Seem to fly it, it will pursue." — JONSON.

II. ii. 297. **aggravate his style.** A man's style was the

titles properly belonging to him; here the meaning is, I will add to his titles those of knave and cuckold.

II. ii. 309. Have to submit to being called by vile names.

II. ii. 311. **Amaimon, Lucifer, Barbason.** These are to be found in Scott's *Discoverie of Witchcraft*, 1584.

II. ii. 325. **eleven o'clock.** In line 274, Falstaff sets the time as between ten and eleven; Ford's mistake causes him to come too late, in III. iii. 113.

II. iii. 24. These fencing terms, mostly from the Italian, are to be found in Saviolo's *Practise*, a treatise on duelling, 1594, and other contemporary books on the art of fencing.

II. iii. 30. **heart of elder.** This phrase is the opposite of heart of oak; the heart or pith of the elder was soft; hence, coward.

II. iii. 34. **Castalion-King-Urinal.** The first two terms refer to the hated Philip II of Castile. For the third, see next note.

II. iii. 60. **Mounseer Mockwater.** Like *Castalion-King-Urinal*, in reference to the doctor's examination of urine.

II. iii. 93. **Cried game.** A much disputed and oft-amended passage. Hart gives evidence that the phrase is from bear-baiting, and interprets it here as meaning, "The sport is arranged or proclaimed."

III. i. 14. **urinals.** See note on II. iii. 60, above.

III. i. 17–26. Evans's song was written by Christopher Marlowe and was published in *England's Helicon*, 1600, over his name. In 1599, it appeared in *The Passionate Pilgrim* as a poem by Shakespeare, probably because it was sung in this play. In his agitation, Evans mingles

with this lyric a line from a metrical version of *Psalm* cxxxvii, "When we did sit in Babylon," line 24.

III. i. 58. **so wide . . . respect.** Acting so differently from the respect he owes himself.

III. i. 103. **Machiavel.** References to Machiavelli, the Florentine statesman and political writer, were common in Elizabethan literature, usually with the characterization of subtlety and unscrupulousness, as in Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*.

III. i. 113. **Come,** etc. The quartos read "Bardolfe, laie their swords to pawne"; but Bardolph cannot be present because he is at this time introducing Ford, as Brook, to Falstaff.

III. ii. 34. **twelve score.** *I.e.*, Twelve score paces.

III. ii. 38. **shower sing.** This sentence means that the matter is perfectly obvious.

III. ii. 44. **Actæon:** see note on II. i. 122, above.

III. ii. 69. **speaks holiday.** Cf. "With many holiday and lady terms." *1 Henry IV*, I. iii. 46.

III. ii. 71. **'tis in his buttons,** etc. He has it in him; he will win.

III. ii. 74. **the wild Prince and Poins.** This refers to Prince Hal, the hero of *Henry IV*, and his companion in loose living, Poins.

III. ii. 76, 77. "I will not assist him with my money to patch his ragged fortunes."

III. ii. 90. **pipe-wine.** Here is a double pun: upon Canary, both a wine and the name of a dance, and upon pipe, both a cask and a musical instrument upon which to play the music for dancing.

III. iii. 45. **"Have I caught my heav'nly jewell"** is a line of a song in Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella*, 1591.

III. iii. 69, 70. "Fortune my foe" was the name of a popular tune.

III. iii. 77. **lisping.** This was an affectation in fine society, which Hamlet, ascribing to women, says they do "in wantonness," and which the male **hawthorne-buds**, or dandies, also practised.

III. iii. 97. **the arras.** The tapestry hangings were so named from a noted place of manufacture, Arras in France. To avoid the dampness of the stone walls, they were hung from a frame, so that a considerable space was left behind them; see *Hamlet*, II. ii. 163.

III. iii. 167. A pun upon *buck*, clothes-washing, and the animals with horns.

III. iii. 204. **dissolute disease.** That is, his disease or evil of dissoluteness.

III. iv. 24. **shaft or bolt.** To make a shaft or bolt was a proverbial expression taken from archery. The bolt for the cross-bar was less skillfully made than the arrow. The phrase means, try it, hit or miss. Cf. the proverbial. "Make a spoon or spoil a horn," and "Make a kirk or a mill of it."

III. iv. 47. **come cut and long-tail.** This proverbial expression, drawn from the stables, means, let come who will; *cut* is docked.

III. iv. 68. **happy man be his dole.** *Dole* is from the same root as *deal;* hence, let a man be happy with what he receives, his lot, his fortunes; "Take what comes."

III. iv. 90. The reference is probably to a cruel sport with the chicken as prize.

III. v. 113. **a good bilbo.** It was the test of a good sword-blade that it could be bent into a circle.

IV. ii. 1. The fact that you are sorry for me has ended my suffering.

IV. ii. 25. **Peer out.** Ford calls upon his horns to show, with allusion to the nursery rhyme on the snail.

IV. ii. 100. **the witch of Brainford.** The quarto gives her name, "Gillian of Brainford." There are contemporary references to her in Elizabethan literature.

IV. ii. 107. **Wives may be merry.** Hence the title, *The Merry Wives of Windsor.*

IV. ii. 129. **go loose.** Madness and insanity were punished and supposed to be cured by confinement. See *Twelfth Night.*

IV. iii. 1. **German.** This may be a reference to the visit of the Count of Mömpelgard, who later became Duke of Würtemberg, to Queen Elizabeth at Windsor in 1592. He was granted the free use of post-horses. See Rye's *England as Seen by Foreigners*, 1865.

IV. iv. 1. One of the most discreet women.

IV. iv. 28. **Herne, the hunter.** Halliwell shows that in the reign of Henry VIII, Richard Horne, yeoman, hunted unlawfully in one of the King's forests. The Quarto reading is Horne.

IV. iv. 83. **Quickly.** The folio reads *quickly.* Theobald first made the emendation.

IV. v. 7. **painted about.** The chambers and beds were hung about with tapestries and "painted cloth," often representing biblical and classical stories.

IV. v. 58. **clerkly.** The annotators have explained this word as meaning scholarly, learned. But the allusion is surely to the ecclesiastical, the parish clerk who leads in reading the responses.

IV. v. 71. **Doctor Faustuses.** Marlowe's tragedy, *Doctor Faustus*, 1588, showed a German whom the devil assisted to play tricks.

IV. v. 79. **cozen-germans.** A pun upon *cousin-german* and *cozening*, or cheating, *Germans*. Q_1 reads *cosen garmombles*. It is to be noted that Sir Hugh and Doctor Caius had sworn to be revenged upon the Host; and that Pistol and Nym have dropped out of sight after the second act. It has been suggested that they may have been hired by Evans and Caius to steal the Host's horses.

IV. v. 89. **duke de Jamany.** This may be another reference to the visit of the Count of Mömpelgard, Duke of Würtemberg.

IV. vi. 22. **rank on foot.** In the language of the hunting-field, a restless, hardly-restrained horse is said to be "rank"; here, "while other jokes are being played so eagerly as to distract all attention."

V. ii. 7. **Mum . . . budget.** The words compounded were used colloquially to signify silence.

V. v. 4. **Europa.** The classical myth of Jove and Europa is told by Ovid, both in his *Metamorphoses*, II. 833 ff., and in his *Fasti*, V. 605.

V. v. 8. **Leda.** Jupiter, in the form of a swan, courted Leda, as told in the *Odyssey*, Book XI, and in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, VI. 109 ff.

V. v. 27. **brib'd buck.** A buck was bribed, or broken up into portions, the shoulders, noombles, haunches, neck, and chyne, according to rules of hunting laid down by Turberville and others. The parts were also apportioned by rule, the shoulders to the gamekeeper, as in line 29. This knowledge proved Falstaff a woodman, or hunter.

V. v. 32. **child of conscience.** By a common Shakespearean construction, a conscientious child; meaning that Cupid, or love, will repay him for his former mishaps at the hands of Ford.

V. v. 41. It is probable that the names *Quickly* and *Pistol* in this scene merely indicate that the parts were taken by the actors who had previously played Quickly and Pistol.

V. v. 41–84. For other similar poetical and fanciful descriptions of the fairies and their occupations, see *Midsummer-Night's Dream* and *Romeo and Juliet.*

V. v. 55. **rein up.** The folio reading is *raise up;* Warburton first made the emendation. Much argument has been expended upon this word. It seems to mean "restrain the faculties of imagination or fancy," that is, let her have a dreamless sleep. *Raise* would mean the opposite.

V. v. 65. **order.** In the Royal Chapel of Windsor Castle are the stalls of the Knights of the Garter, each with its coat of arms, crest, and blazon. *Garter* is played upon in line 70.

V. v. 73. ***Honi soit qui mal y pense.*** The motto of the Order of the Garter.

V. v. 88. **trial-fire.** Trial by battle and trial by ordeal are familiar to the student of history.

V. v. 99. **bloody fire.** Fire in the blood.

V. v. 111. **fairy oaks.** In the first Folio, *faire yoakes;* in the second, *okes. Fairy oaks* would mean these antlers which resemble oak branches. There may be a pun on ox yoke. Cf. l. 126, below.

V. v. 132. **in despite of the teeth.** In direct opposition,

in the face of. Here is a doubling of the prepositional phrase, without alteration of the meaning of either phrase alone, much like the Elizabethan doubling of the negative.

V. v. 146. **a coxcomb of frieze.** A fool's cap made of Welsh cloth, — in allusion to being tricked even by Evans.

V. v. 165. **as wicked as his wife.** The poverty of Job and the wickedness of his wife had long been proverbial. See *Job* ii. 9, 10.

V. v. 172. **a plummet o'er me.** This means either that ignorance itself (*i.e.*, Evans) sounds my depths, or ignorance is above me by the length of a sounding- or plummet-line.

Textual Variants

The text in the present edition is based upon the first Folio, and the following list records the more important variations from that version. Passages introduced into the text from the first Quarto are enclosed in brackets.

I. i. 28. py'r] Capell; per-lady Ff.
46. George] Theobald; Thomas Ff.
59, 63. *Shal.*] Capell *conj.*; *Slen.* Ff.
129. [They . . . pocket] Qq.; Ff *omit.*
258. content] Ff; contempt Theobald *conj.*
iii. 15. lime] Steevens; lyve Ff; lyme Q_1.
22. Hungarian] Ff; Gongarian Qq.
30. minute's] Ff; minim's Bennet-Langton *conj.*
54. well] Q_1; will Ff.
68. *œillades*] Pope *conj.*; illiads Ff.
104. Page] Q_1; Ford Ff.
105. Ford] Q_1; Page Ff.
92. *baillez*] Theobald; ballow Ff.

II. i. 5. precisian] Ff; physician Theobald *conj.*
63. Hundredth Psalm] Rowe; hundred Psalms Ff.
224, 226. Brook] Q_1; Broome Ff (*and so throughout*).
228. Mynheers] Theobald *conj.*; An-heires Ff.
ii. 53. God] Q_1; heaven Ff.
iii. 93. Cried game] Ff Qq; Cried I aim? Dyce (Douce *conj.*).

III. iii. 65. tyrant] Ff; traitor Q_1.
v. 5, 6. and to be . . . offal] Q_1; like a . . . offal, and to be thrown in the Thames Ff.
11. blind bitch's] Ff; bitch's blind Theobald.
90. [By the Lord] Q_1; Yes Ff.
IV. ii. 105. him] F_2; F_1 *omits.*
123. ging] F_2; gin F_1.
194. hag] F_3; rag F_{1-2}.
iv. 28. *Herne*] Ff; Horne Q_1.
43. [Disguised . . . head] Theobald, *adapted from* Q_1; Ff *omit.*
83. Quickly] Theobald *conj.;* quickly Ff.
v. 79. three cozen-germans] Ff; cosen garmombles Q_1.
vi. 27. Ever] Pope; even Ff.
V. v. 43. orphan] Ff; ouphen Theobald *conj.*
55. Rein] Warburton *conj.;* raise Ff.
111. fairy oaks] Grant White; faire yoakes F_1; faire okes F_2.

Glossary

'a, colloquial or dialectal for *he;* II. i. 142.
abide, endure; I. i. 311.
a-birding, hunting birds with hawks; III. iii. 247; III. v. 46; etc.
absolute, perfect; III. iii. 66.
abstract, list, memorandum; IV. ii. 63.
abused, deceived, dishonored; II. iii. 306.
additions, titles; II. ii. 312.
address, prepare; III. v. 135.
admittance, privilege of entrance, — here the houses and society of the great; II. iii. 236: approval, recognized fashion; III. iii. 61.
adversary, mistake for *advocate;* II. iii. 98.
Æsculapius, the Greek god of medicine, hence physician; II. iii. 29.
affecting, with affectation in language; II. i. 145.
aggravate, increase, add to; II. ii. 297.
All-Hallowmas, All-Saints Day, Nov. 1; I. i. 211.
allicholy, for *melancholy;* I. iv. 164.
alligant, Mistress Quickly's pronunciation of *elegant;* II. ii. 70.
allowed, approved, admired; II. ii. 237.
amazed, astounded, so as to do nothing; III. iii. 126; V. iii. 19.
amazedness, astonishment and fright; IV. iv. 55.
angel, a gold coin, of the value of about ten shillings; I. iii. 60; II. ii. 73.
anon, immediately, at once; III. ii. 87; IV. ii. 41.
Anthropophaginian, cannibal; IV. v. 10.

aqua-vitæ, brandy or whiskey; II. ii. 319.
arras, tapestry; see note, III. ii. 97.
arrested, seized by law, attached; V. v. 119.
article, condition, matter; II. i. 53.
assay, try, tempt, attempt ; II. i. 26.
authentic, well-known to be of high rank; II. ii. 236.
avised, advised, aware; I. i. 169; I. iv. 106.

baggage, saucy woman; IV. ii. 194.
baillez, Fr., deliver, bring; I. iv. 92.
bell-wether, old sheep, with reference also to horns; III. v. 110.
bestowed, put in place; IV. v. 109.
birding-pieces, fowling-pieces, guns; IV. ii. 58.
blazon, heraldic shield, or armorial bearings; V. v. 68.
bloody, in the blood; V. v. 99.
boarded, attacked, a naval term; II. i. 92.
bodykins, a mild oath; II. iii. 46.
Bohemian-Tartar, wild fellow; IV. v. 21.
bold-braving, outfacing, browbeating; II. ii. 28.
bolt, a blunt arrow; see note, III. iv. 24.
breed-bate, strife-breeder, mischief maker; I. iv. 13.
bribed, see note; V. v. 27.
buck-basket, laundry-basket; III. iii. 2; III. v. 88; etc.
bucking, washing; III. iii. 139, etc.
Bucklersbury, a part of Cheapside in London, containing chiefly druggists' shops; III. iii. 79.
buck-washing, washing of clothes; III. iii. 166.
budget, mumbudget, silence; V. ii. 7.
bully, fine fellow, brave boy; II. iii. 29.
bully-rook, slang for bully-boy; I. iii. 2; II. i. 200; etc.
bully stale, my fine doctor; II. iii. 31.
burn (sack), heat in order to mitigate; II. i. 223; III. i. 112.
by and by, at once, immediately; IV. i. 7.

Cain-colored, reddish or yellow, as in old pictures of Cain; I. iv. 23.
canaries, possibly *quandaries;* II. ii. 62.
canary, a sweet wine from the Canary Islands; III. ii. 89.
carrion, carcase (contemptuously for a person); III. iii. 205.
carves, makes inviting gestures; I. iii. 49. The sense is much disputed.
cashier, pay off; I. iii. 6.
cashiered, slang term for robbed of money; I. i. 184.
Cataian, Chinese, from *Cathay;* used as a vague term of contempt; II. i. 48.
chalices, wine-cups; III. v. 29.
charactery, means of expression in writing; V. v. 77.
charge, cause expense; II. ii. 171.
chariness, integrity, circumspectness; II. i. 102.
charms, occult powers of fascination; II. ii. 108.
cheaters, for *escheators*, collectors for the royal exchequer; I. iii. 72.
choler, anger; II. iii. 89.
clear, guiltless, clear of blame; III. iii. 124.
closet, room, usually private or bed room; I. iv. 39.
coach-fellow, companion, yoke-fellow; II. ii. 7.
coat, coat of arms; I. i. 17, 18; etc.
cog, cheat, dissemble; III. i. 123; III. iii. 50, 76.
cogscomb, for *coxcomb*, head; III. ii. 91.
companion, fellow, used contemptuously; III. i. 124.
complexion, sort, condition; IV. ii. 24.
compremises, a corruption of *compromises;* I. i. 34.
conceal, for *reveal;* IV. v. 45, 46.
conceited, well conceived; I. iii. 26.
contracted, engaged to be married; V. v. 236.
conversation, action, behaviour; II. i. 26.
convey, thieves' slang for steal; I. iii. 32.

cornuto, from Lat. *cornus,* horn; hence, deceived, jealous husband; III. v. 71.
costard, head, literally apple; III. i. 15.
couch, hide, particularly by lying down; V. ii. 1; V. iii. 15.
counsel, secret; IV. vi. 7.
Counter-gate, the gate of one of the two prisons called the Counter; III. iii. 85.
country fire, an open fire of wood; V. v. 256.
cowl-staff, a pole upon which two persons carried a tub or vessel of water; III. iii. 156.
coz, cousin; I, i. 250; III. iv. 36.
cozenage, trickery; IV. v. 64.
cozen, cheat; IV. ii. 180; IV. v. 38; IV. v. 95.
cross, thwart, send ill fortune; IV. v. 130; V. v. 40.
cry aim, encourage, applaud; III. ii. 46.
curtal, with a docked tail; II. i. 114.
cut, with docked tail, of a horse; III. iv. 47.

Datchet-Mead, literally, dirty-clothes meadow; place for washing clothes; III. iii. 15, 141; etc.
daubery, deceit, trickery; IV. ii. 186.
desperate, literally, without hope; III. v. 127.
detest, for *protest;* I. iv. 160.
dickens, probably, a euphemism for the devil; III. ii. 19.
diffused, confused, discordant; IV. iv. 54.
discover, uncover, expose; II. ii. 190.
dispatch, execute, accomplish; V. iii. 4; V. v. 189.
doom, judgment, judgment-day; V. v. 62.
doubt, suspect, fear; I. iv. 43.
draff, swill; IV. ii. 109.
drawer, tapster; II. ii. 165.
drumble, to be sluggish or lazy, dawdle; III. iii. 156.

engrossed, taken with all my power; II. ii. 203.
entertain, employ as servant; I. ii. 10.
Ephesian, fine fellow, bully-boy; IV. v. 19.
Epicurean, given only to pleasure and self-gratification; II. ii. 300.
erection, Mistress Quickly's word for *direction;* III. v. 41.
eringoes, candied sea-holly root, a confection; V. v. 23.
Ethiopian, slang term for boon companion; II. iii. 28.
even, evening, although here it is morning; I. i. 203.
evitate, destroy, avoid; V. v. 241.
exhibit, bring forth, offer, — the original meaning of the word; II. i. 29.
expressure, expression; V. v. 71.
eyas-musket, young sparrow-hawk; II. iii. 22.

fallow, pale yellow or fawn-color, as in fallow deer; I. i. 91.
fantasy, imagination; here, dreams; V. v. 55.
fap, a slang term for drunk; I. i. 183.
farthingale, a petticoat extended by a framework of hoops or whalebone; III. iii. 68.
fee'd, paid money for; II. ii. 204.
fee-simple, absolute possession, a legal term; IV. ii. 225.
fellow, literally, companion; here, keeper; V. v. 29.
fery, corruption of *very;* I. i. 50.
fico, Ital., fig; I. iii. 33.
fidelicet, corruption of *videlicet,* namely; I. i. 141.
figure, a term used in astrology, diagrams of the planets; IV. ii. 185: fancy; IV. ii. 231.
filching, stealing; I. iii. 28.
fine, a legal term of assurance; IV. ii. 225.
flannel, the woolen cloth, first manufactured in Wales, from the Welsh *gwlanen,* woolen; hence, a slang epithet for Welshmen; V. v. 172.
foin, a thrust with the rapier; II. iii. 24.

foppery, foolery, joke; V. v. 131.
frampold, quarrelsome; II. ii. 94.
fretted, chafed, consumed; III. v. 116.
frieze, woolen cloth, made especially in Wales and Ireland; V. v. 146.

Galen, a famous Greek physician; hence, doctor; II. iii. 30; III. i. 67.
galled, worn away, wasted; III. iv. 5.
Gallia, Wales; III. i. 99.
gallimaufry, a hash, a variety, here of women; II. i. 119.
garsoon, for Fr., *garçon*, boy; V. v. 218.
Garter, name of an inn; II. i. 100, 187; etc.
geminy, pair of twin brothers; II. ii. 9.
gentry, rank, position in the social scale; II. i. 53.
ging, company, crowd; IV. ii. 123.
give, display as armorial bearings; I. i. 16.
go to, come now; II. i. 7.
good-year, an imprecation, or mild curse; I. iv. 129.
groat, fourpence; I. i. 158.

haviour, behaviour, but not a contraction; I. iii. 86.
have with you, go on, come on; III. ii. 93.
having, property; III. ii. 73.
heartlings, little heart, a mild oath; III. iv. 59.
Hibocrates, for *Hippocrates*, a famous Greek physician and writer; III. i. 66.
hinds, clownish servants; III. v. 99.
hodge-pudding, probably a pudding with many ingredients; V. v. 159.
hold, fulfil the promise; V. i. 1.
holiday, in fine language; III. ii. 69.
honest, chaste; II. i. 247; II. ii. 231; etc.
honesty, chastity; II. i. 88; II. i. 103; etc.

horn-mad, as angry as a mad bull (with allusion to the cuckold's horns); I. iv. 52; III. v. 155.
humour, temperament, disposition, mood; I. i. 135; etc.
husband, manage to the best advantage; IV. vi. 52.

if, even if, although; I. i. 106.
image, description; IV. vi. 17.
infection, for *affection;* II. ii. 120.
instalment, seat or place of rank; V. v. 67.
instance, example; II. ii. 256.
intend, understand; I. iv. 47.
intention, intentness; I. iii. 73.

Jack, used as a term of disparagement; I. iv. 123.
Jack-a-Lent, a stuffed doll, thrown at in sport during Lent; III. iii. 27; V. v. 134.
Jack-a-nape, a monkey; literally, an ape from Naples; I. iv. 116; II. iii. 86; etc.
jays, used for loose women, in contrast with faithful turtle doves; III. ii. 44.
jerkin, jacket or waistcoat; I. iii. 18.
John, used contemptuously, like Jack; III. i. 86.

ken, know; I. iii. 40.
kibes, chilblains; I. iii. 35.
kidney, rank or stamp; III. v. 117.
kind, respect, or degree; III. iii. 232.
kissing-comfits, confections for perfuming the breath; V. v. 22.
knaves, men-servants; III. v. 99.
knot, crowd, company; III. ii. 52; IV. ii. 123.

labras, Span., lips; I. i. 166.
landed, possessing real estate; IV. iv. 86.

larded, intermingled; IV. vi. 14.
laron, thief; I. iv. 71.
latten, made of a soft metal, brass or tin; I. i. 165.
leman, lover; IV. ii. 172.
lewdsters, literally lewd women, but here lewd persons; V. iii. 23.
lines, frame of mind; IV. ii. 21.
liquor, to grease, anoint; IV. v. 100.
luces, pikes, fresh-water fish; I. i. 16.
lurch, a slang term for steal; II. ii. 27.
luxury, lust, gratification of the senses; V. v. 98.

madrigals, songs in several parts, without instrumental accompaniment; III. i. 18.
make, do, as in German; II. ii. 245; IV. ii. 55.
marry, a mild oath, originally, by the Virgin Mary; I. i. 214.
Mars, the god of war, hence the fiery leader; I. iii. 113.
mechanical, belonging socially to the class of mechanics or tradesmen, not a gentleman born; II. ii. 290.
mere, absolute; IV. v. 64.
metheglin, a fermented drink, made of honey and spices; V. v. 166.
Michaelmas, St. Michael's Day, Sept. 29; I. i. 212.
middle-earth, the earth, the world of mortals; V. v. 84.
mill-sixpences, coins with raised, or milled edges; I. i. 158.
mince, trip away; V. i. 9.
mischief, harm, hurt; IV. ii. 76.
Mockwater, a contemptuous term for a physician; II. iii. 60.
monster, half-man, half-beast; he refers to himself with horns; III. ii. 82, 93.
montant, an upward thrust of the rapier; II. iii. 27.
motion, conception, idea, notion; I. i. 56: proposition; I. i. 221: overtures; III. iv. 67.

mounseur, monsieur, sir; II. iii. 59.
mountain-foreigner, a Welshman; I. i. 164.
mum (colloquial), silence; V. ii. 7.
mummy, medicine made from embalmed bodies; III. v. 19.
muse, ponder so long as not to notice present conditions; V. v. 253.
mussel-shell, in allusion to open mouth; IV. v. 29.
mutually, all at the same time; V. v. 103.
Mynheers (conjectural emendation of *An-heires*), Sirs, from the Dutch; II. i. 218.

nay-word, pass-word, watchword; II. ii. 131; V. ii. 5.
nuthook, thieves' slang for constable or sheriff's officer, "catch-poll"; I. i. 171.

obsequious, complaisant; IV. ii. 2.
observance, respectful attention; II. ii. 203.
'Od's, corruption of "God's"; I. iv. 64; III. iv. 59.
'Od's nouns, a mild oath; IV. i. 25.
œillades, Fr., amorous looks; I. iii. 68.
o'erlooked, bewitched by a fairy; V. v. 87.
old, great, used intensively; plenty of, abundant; I. iv. 5.
once to-night, as soon as night comes; III. iv. 103.
order, that is, of the Knights of the Garter; V. v. 65.
ork, Evans's corruption of *work;* I. i. 50.
orld, a corruption of *world;* III. i. 16.
orphan, fairies, because they were of spontaneous birth without parents; V. v. 43.
ouphes, goblins; IV. iv. 49; V. v. 61.
oyes, Fr., *oyez,* the opening call of the court-crier, here the roll-call; V. v. 45.

panderly, acting as panders, or go-betweens; IV. ii. 181.
passant, an heraldic term for walking; I. i. 20.

pass, surpass, go beyond belief; I. i. 310; IV. ii. 128, 143.
pauca verba, Lat., few words; I. i. 123.
peaking, slinking, sneaking; III. v. 71.
peevish, foolish; I. iv. 14.
Pelion, a mountain in Thessaly; II. i. 82.
pendent, flowing; IV. vi. 42.
period, climax, height; III. iii. 47: point; IV. ii. 237.
perpend, consider; II. i. 19.
pin, a mere trifle; I. i. 117.
pinnace, a small sailing vessel; I. iii. 88.
pinse, dialectal for *pinch;* V. v. 137.
pittie-ward, towards the pittie, either a local name, or the small (petit) park; III. ii. 5.
plight, position or status, not necessarily bad; II. ii. 172.
posset, a food or beverage of custardlike consistency, made of hot milk curdled by ale or spiced wine; I. iv. 8; V. v. 180.
possitable, corruption for *positively;* I. i. 244.
postmaster, the master of the post-horses; V. v. 200.
pottle, a measure containing two quarts; II, i. 223; III. v. 30.
prabbles, brabbles, quarrels; I. i. 57: babbling; IV. i. 52.
precisian, a very punctilious person, especially in religious observances; hence, spiritual adviser; II. i. 5.
preeches, for *breeched,* dialectal for flogged; IV. i. 81.
preparations, equipment, accomplishments; II. ii. 238.
pribbles, probably a corruption of *quibbles;* I. i. 56.
prief, corruption for *brief,* a note; I. i. 146.
presently, at once, immediately; III. iii. 95; IV. ii. 99.
primero, a game of cards; IV. v. 104.
properties, a theatrical term for articles used in furnishing the stage; IV. iv. 78.
protested, made protestations of love; III. ii. 75.

puddings, stuffed intestines, — the original meaning of the word; II. i. 32.
pullet-sperm, eggs; III. v. 32.
pumpion, the old word for *pumpkin;* III. iii. 43.
punk, prostitute; II. ii. 141.
punto, thrust with the point, a fencing term; II. iii. 25.
py'r, a corruption of *By our;* I. i. 28.

quaint, prettily, daintily; IV. vi. 41.
quality, duties of your profession; V. v. 44.
quarter, to add one coat of arms to another; I. i. 24, 26.
quean, low woman; IV. ii. 180.
question, converse, talk; III. i. 78.
quick, living, as in " the quick and the dead " ; III. iv. 90.

rake, dialect for cover with ashes; V. v. 48.
rank, eager, keen; IV. vi. 22.
recourse, access; II. i. 223.
recovery, " fine and r.," " means by which an estate tail was converted into a fee-simple, hence = absolute ownership "; IV. ii. 225.
red-lattice, tavern, from the red lattices at the windows, as in *2 Henry IV,* II. ii. 86; II. ii. 28.
register, recorded list; II. ii. 194.
reins, loins; III. v. 24.
rein up, restrain; V. v. 55.
remorse, pity; III. v. 10.
reverse, back-handed stroke; II. iii. 27.
revolted, disloyal; III. ii. 40.
ronyon, mangy creature; IV. ii. 195.
rushling, Mistress Quickly's term for *rustling;* II. ii. 69.

sack, a strong wine from southern Europe; II. i. 9; III. v. 3; etc.

sadness, seriousness, earnest; III. v, 125; IV. ii. 83.
salt, savor, flavor, quality; II. iii. 50.
salt-butter, economical, as eating salted butter rather than the fresh, which was more costly to use; II. ii. 290.
sauce, make pay dearly; IV. iii. 11.
scall, scabby, scurvy; III. i. 123.
scaped, escaped, but not a contraction; II. i. 1.
scut, short tail, as of a rabbit or deer; V. v. 20.
sea-coal, coal brought to London by sea; I. iv. 9.
season, best time; III. iii. 169.
several, distinct, different; III. v. 110; V. v. 65; etc.
shaft, a sharp-pointed arrow; III. iv. 24.
she-Mercury, female messenger; Mercury was the messenger of the gods; II. ii. 82.
shent, disgraced, put to shame; I. iv. 38.
ship-tire, a fanciful head-dress; III. iii. 60.
shrewd, harsh or malicious; II. ii. 232.
simples, herbs used for medicines; I. iv. 65; III. iii. 84.
sirrah, sir, usually used contemptuously as fellow; I. i. 281; I. iii. 87: diminutive; IV. i. 20.
sith, since; II. ii. 195.
slack, neglect, delay; III. iv. 115.
slice, either cut, the verb; or a thin piece; I. i. 134.
'Slid, God's lid, a mild oath; III. iv. 24.
softly-sprighted, gentle, soft-spirited; I. iv. 25.
something, somewhat; IV. vi. 22.
sot, fool, not necessarily drunken; III. i. 19.
speciously, Mistress Quickly's word for *specially;* III. iv. 113; IV. v. 114.
speed, cause to thrive and be happy; III. iv. 12: succeed; III. v. 67, 137.
sprag, dialect for quick, active; IV. i. 84.
stale, slang term for physician; II. iii. 31.
stamps, coins stamped or minted; III. iv. 16.

stand, a technical hunting term for a position from which to shoot advantageously; V. v. 248.
standing-bed, a bed upon a bedstead; IV. v. 7.
state, condition, position; III. iv. 5.
still, constantly; V. v. 96.
stoccado, a fencing term for a thrust; II. i. 234.
stock, thrust; II. iii. 26.
stopped, closed, stoppered; III. v. 114.
swinged, whipped, struck; V. v. 197.

take, catch, apprehend; III. ii. 41.
takes, bewitches; IV. iv. 32.
taking, fit of fear; III. iii. 191.
tall, able, efficient; I. iv. 26: fine; II. ii. 11.
tender, offer; I. i. 215.
terms, titles, words, names; II. ii. 309, 310.
tester, a Henry IV silver shilling, reduced in value to sixpence; I. iii. 96.
thrift, economy, for which the French were celebrated; I. iii. 93.
thorough, through, the older form; IV. v. 32.
thrumm'd, fringed; IV. ii. 80.
time, musical term for the length of the beat; V. v. 95.
tire, head-dress; III. iii. 61.
tire-valiant, a high head-dress; III. iii. 61.
toys, trifles, foolish things; I. iv. 45; V. v. 46.
traverse, a fencing term, probably cut across; II. iii. 25.
trib, corruption of *trip;* V. iv. 1.
tricking, adornment; IV. iv. 79.
trot, for *troth;* I. iv. 64.
troth, truth or faith; I. i. 199; I. iv. 154, etc.
trow, literally, believe or know; but here "I should like to know"; I. iv. 140.
truckle-bed, trundle-bed; IV. v. 7.

tuns, barrels; II. i. 66.
turn, refer, direct; III. iv. 2.
turtles, turtle-doves, proverbially faithful in love; III. i. 83; III. iii. 44.

udge, corruption of *judge;* I. i. 192.
uncape, disclose; III. iii. 176.
uncomeliness, rude behaviour; II. i. 60.
unseasoned, unseasonable, or premature; II. ii. 174.
unweighed, thoughtless, careless; II. i. 23.
urchins, roguish elves, originally evil spirits in the form of hedgehogs; IV. iv. 49.

varletto, rascal, servant; IV. v. 66.
veneys, touches, or bouts; I. i. 296.
via, come on! away! II. ii. 159.
villainy, corruption of *villain;* II. iii. 16.
vizaments, advisement, consideration; I. i. 39.
vizarded, masked; IV. vi. 40.
vizards, masks for the face; IV. iv. 70.
vlouting-stog, flouting-stock, laughing-stock, butt of ridicule; III. i. 120; IV. v. 83.

wag, go on, pass on his way; II. iii. 74, 101.
walk, deer-forest, " deer run " ; V. v. 29.
ward, guard, a fencing term for position of defence; III. ii. 258.
warrener, keeper of a rabbit-warren; I. iv. 28.
watched, caught by lying in wait; V. v. 107.
wears, passes; V. i. 8.
welkin, the vault of heaven, the sky; I. iii. 101.
well-favoured, of fine features; II. ii. 285.
what, an exclamation equivalent to why, well, come now; I. iv. 1; I. iv. 58.

whiting-time, bleaching-season, in spring; III. iii. 140.
whitsters, washerwomen and bleachers; III. iii. 14.
wight, wretched fellow, literally man; I. iii. 23: person; I. iii. 40.
wink, shut both eyes; V. v. 52.
wise-woman, witch, fortune-teller; IV. v. 27.
with, by; III. v. 111.
withal, with, particularly at the end of a phrase or sentence; II. i. 90; III. i. 69.
wittol, a man with an unfaithful wife, a cuckold; II. ii. 313.
wittolly, with an unfaithful wife; II. ii. 283.
woodman, hunter, woodsman; V. v. 30.
worts, corruption of *words;* I. i. 123: vegetables; I. i. 124.
wot, know; II. ii. 90.

yearn, grieve, cause sorrow; III. v. 45.
yellowness, jealousy; I. iii. 111.
yoke, pair, couple; II. i. 182.

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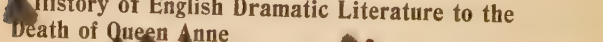

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Falstaff does not aim at love, only thinks of something to avail the women. After his vanity he thinks everybody admires him. He degraded for himself

A moral standpoint of the play

One of two plays where Shak. invented own plot.

Falstaff a plot controlled character, he has the plot & wants the character to sit in.

Pure comedy.

Mistress Quickly - easily made a tool, easily influenced, a gossip.

Slender -